

# 2d artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine  
Issue 076 April 2012

## Interview

Herve Groussin

## Articles

Sketchbook of  
Herman Ng

## The Gallery

Roma Cherepov, Bruno  
Hamzagic, plus more!

# MANGA

Thailand-based artist **Patipat Asavasena** brings us the first of his five fantastic illustrations in chapter one of our new Manga Historical Characters series, this month creating Genghis Kahn.

## Designing Droids

Leaving no stone unturned and giving us priceless advice every step of the way, **Jeremy Love** talks us through the creation of a Medi Droid.

## Painting Creatures from Mythology

**Andrei Pervukhin** (Photoshop) and **Simon Dominic** (Painter) showcase their skills with the painting of a Mamalarang .

## Dreamscape

**Jama Jurabaev** moves to the matte painting stage as he continues to explain the processes he and his team used to create this short movie.







## Editorial

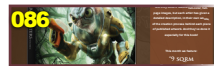
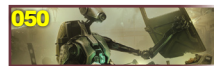
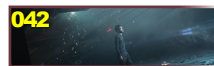
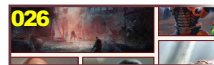
Welcome to the April issue of 2DArtist magazine! You might have thought we would have prepared an issue full of Easter bunnies, little chicks and all the other cheesy things that come out this time of year. I'm sure you are pleased to hear that we have, in fact, resisted this urge and instead given you your monthly fix of droids, mythological creatures and manga characters!

On the subject of manga characters we will get the ball rolling this month by mentioning our cool new series about painting historical characters in this iconic style. We will be in the more than capable hands of Thailand-based artist **Patipat Asavasena** throughout this series, who will be showing us exactly what it is that makes a character look manga in style, and how to use these features and unique characteristics to create our own cool illustrations. As you will be able to tell from the cover image, the quality of the art from this series is really great, and if you like this image you will love the rest of the series.

I hope you all enjoyed watching **Jama Jurabaev's** amazing Dreamscape video last month. In this issue he continues to explain he developed his storyboard and concepts to create high quality matte paintings to use as the backdrop for his imaginary planet. This series is new ground for our magazine and is proving to be really interesting. Stay tuned for next month's issue where **Jama** will be showing us how he filmed the live footage that he composited into his amazing images.

Here at 2DArtist we pride ourselves on our ability to bring your great tutorials month after month, but every now and then I read a tutorial that's a must-read for anyone interested in working in the concept art industry. That is the case with this month's droids tutorial by **Jeremy Love**. Jeremy talks us through creating a droid concept for a game from the very first phase of creating and refining thumbnail sketches, through to developing your chosen design and creating technical drawings for a 3D artist. He leaves no stone unturned and gives us priceless advice every step of the way, including information about the amount of time it should take to develop a project like this. I think you are going to love this one.

This month's mythological creature is the creepy mamalarang. The mamalarang is a witch who uses bugs to torture and cast spells on her unsuspecting prey, and in this issue **Simon Dominic Brewer** and **Andrei Pervukhin** show us how they interpreted this brief to create their own gruesome paintings.



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### Creatures from Mythology

by Andrei Pervukhin & Simon Dominic

### "The Black Sheep is Coming"

Project overview by Xavier Etchepare

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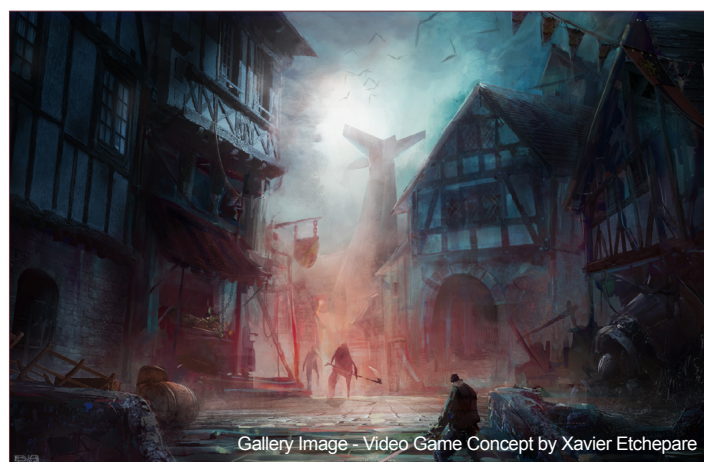
Digital Art Masters: Volume 6 – Free Chapter

### About Us

3DTOTAL.COM Ltd information and contacts

Editor Simon Morse	Layout Layla Khani Matt Lewis Az Pishneshin	Content Simon Morse Tom Greenway Richard Tilbury Chris Perrins	Proofing Jo Hargreaves
Lead Designer Chris Perrins		Marketing Tom Helme	

I know that you are going to love all of the amazing tutorials in this excellent issue. The influx of inspiration doesn't end there though; there is also a stunning gallery featuring work from **Xavier Etchepare**, **Bruno Hamzagic**, **Ivan Kashubo** and many more talented artists, an interview with the jaw-dropping digital artist **Herve Groussi**, and a sketchbook featuring the work of **Herman Ng**.

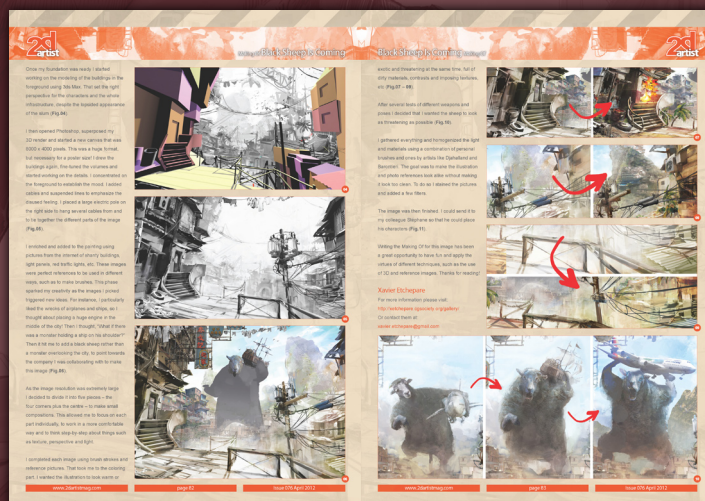






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If you're having problems viewing the double-page spreads that we feature in this magazine, follow this handy little guide on how to set up your PDF reader!



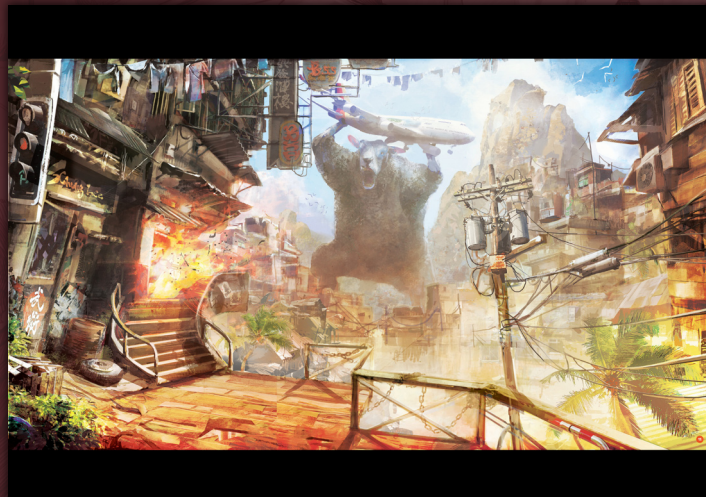
## Setting up your PDF reader

For optimum viewing of the magazine it is recommended that you have the latest Acrobat Reader installed.

You can download it for free here: [DOWNLOAD!](#)

To view the many double-page spreads featured in 2D Artist magazine, you can set the reader to display 'two-up', which will show double-page spreads as one large landscape image:

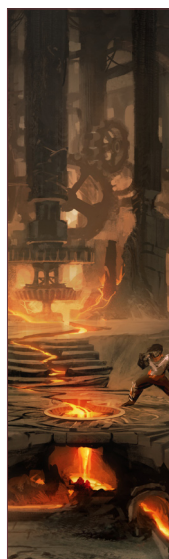
1. Open the magazine in Reader;
2. Go to the **View** menu, then **Page display**;
3. Select **Two-up Continuous**, making sure that **Show Cover Page** is also selected.





## Contributing Artists

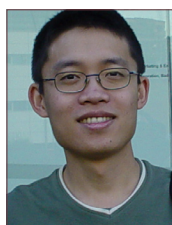
Every month many artists from around the world contribute to **3DCreative** and **2DArtist** magazines. Here you can find out a bit more about them! If you would like to be a part of **3DCreative** or **2DArtist** magazine, please contact: [simon@3dtotal.com](mailto:simon@3dtotal.com)



### Hervé Groussin

Hervé Groussin a.k.a Nuro is a concept Artist/Illustrator who has a lot of experience in the videogame industry. He has worked at Ubisoft and helped create various licenses such as Avatar the game, Prince of Persia and Far Cry. He's currently doing concept design and production illustration for an un-announced project at Square Enix-Eidos.

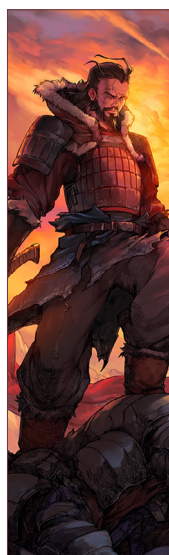
<http://www.nuro-art.com/>  
[nurofen\\_92@hotmail.com](mailto:nurofen_92@hotmail.com)



### Herman Ng

Herman Ng has travelled from Hong Kong to Australia to study animation and has worked in the games industry for 6 years. He has been around the world getting inspiration and experience and eventually wants to work on big projects in America.

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### Patipat Asavasena

Patipat Asavasena is a graduated engineer, but he decided to follow his passion in art. Currently, he's a full-time freelance artist living in Nonthaburi, Thailand. His work has been influenced by Japanese manga, but also has a wide-range of styles and is very interested in art, photography and technology.

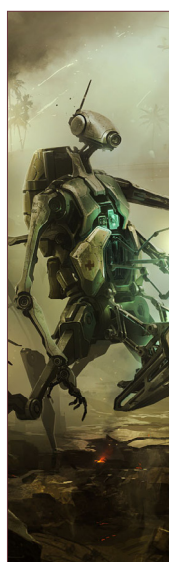
<http://asuka111.net/>  
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### Jama Jurabaev

After Jama's graduation as an aerospace engineer in 2004 he never thought that his life will be spent working with digital art. But now he is working as a concept artist, and digital art has totally consumed his life. He has done a lot of illustrations for advertising agencies in the past and recently secured a position at MPC in London.

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### Jeremy Love

Jeremy Love is a Freelance concept artist living in Australia. After leaving New Zealand at 19, he spent 10 years working as a sign writer, graphic designer and airbrush artist before moving into 3d animation and finally concept art. Jeremy has worked in games and film for the last 7 years on IP's such as Hellboy, Star Wars and Narnia.

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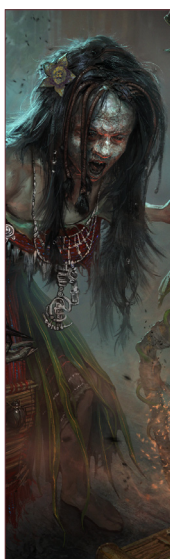






### Andrei Pervukhin

Andrei Pervukhin is a 25 year old Russian artist who in 2007 graduated from the Veronezh art College. Andrei has worked as an illustrator for a Moscow based publisher and does traditional and digital artwork. He has been doing digital artwork for 2 years. In his spare time he enjoys boxing, watching movies and playing computer games.  
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### Simon Dominic

Simon is a freelance illustrator specializing in fantasy, sci-fi, horror and the generally bizarre. He paints digitally, applying traditional techniques through use of digital tools. He has worked on game art, book covers, editorial and magazine workshops since going pro in 2009.

<http://www.painterly.co.uk/>

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### Xavier Etchepare

Xavier Etchepare is a versatile artist who in the last few years has worked in advertising, video games and events production. He now works at Ubisoft Studios after choosing to bring his creativity to the videogame and animation industry.  
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[xavier.etchepare@gmail.com](mailto:xavier.etchepare@gmail.com)



### Would You Like To Contribute To 3DCreative Or 2DArtist Magazines?

We are always looking for tutorial artists, gallery submissions, potential interviewees, 'making of' writers, and more. For more information, please send a link to your work to: [simon@3dtotal.com](mailto:simon@3dtotal.com)



© Image by Hervé Groussin, courtesy of Ubisoft



"When I have settled on a pleasing composition I try to bring it to life and create a really strong image. I always try to capture personality or emotion in my image"

# HERVE GROSSIN

Herve Groussin is an incredible, multi-talented concept artist who is proficient in digital painting, 3D modeling and texturing, as well as traditional techniques. In this month's interview he tells us how he worked his way through the ranks until he reached the dizzy heights of his current position at Eidos/Square-Enix Studio in Montreal.



Hi Herve, thanks for agreeing to speak to us today. I've been trying to do some research to find out a little about you and on your site it says you work at Ubisoft in Montreal. Now as we all know this is a huge name in the games industry, I am sure our readers would love to know how you got into digital art, and how you ended up working there.

I started in 1999 with Haiku Studios: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haiku\\_Studios](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haiku_Studios). This was the company that gave me my first chance in the industry. I was supposed to look for work in industrial design, as this is what I studied, but I was very attracted to the new media areas such as 3D and 2D digital art. At that time I worked on everything I could. I did my own concepts and modeled, textured, lit and rendered them. However today you can't do everything, so I moved on to digital and concept art. Since then 3D has come on a long way and has become too complicated.

When I lived in France I was approached by Ubisoft. The company was looking for an environment concept artist for its project so I agreed to move to Canada to start working with them. At Ubisoft I work mainly on pre-production and production. I focus mainly on the creation of different environments. What interests me the most is the pre-production because it's at this stage that the foundations of the games are laid.

**What was the first project that you worked on at Ubisoft and what was the most**



© Image by Herve Groussin

**valuable advice you took away from the experience?**

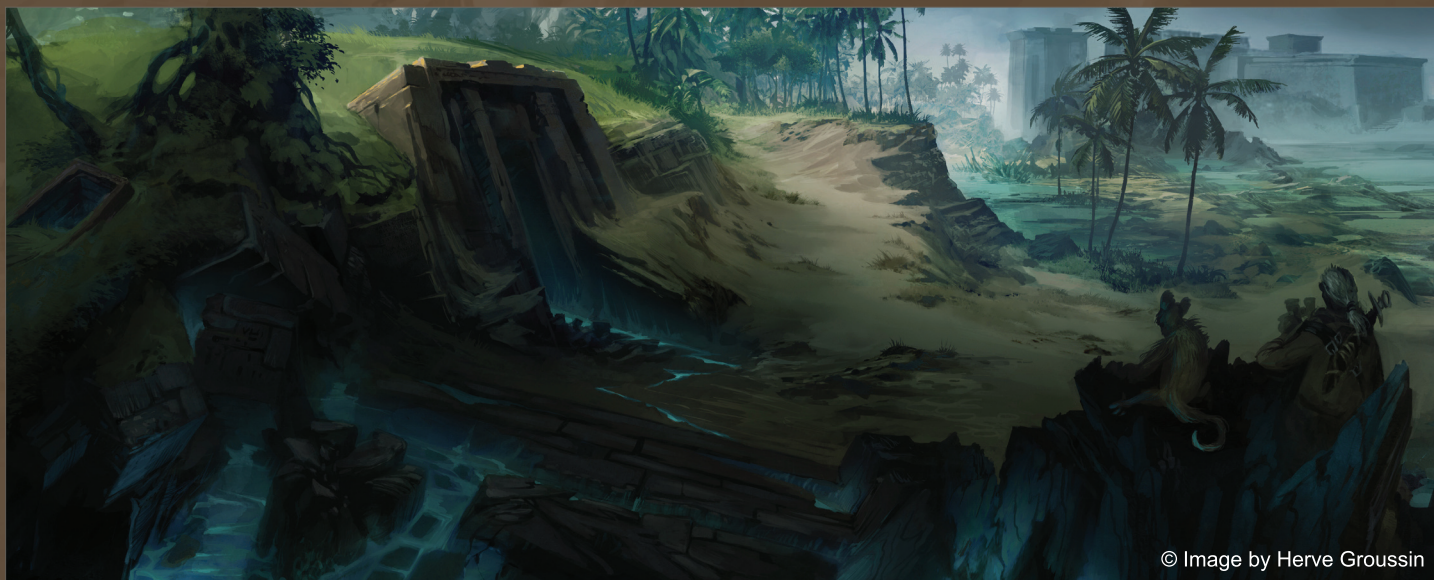
When I moved to Canada, I started by working on the Video Game: *Lost Via Domus*, which was a lot of fun. I got on really well with the core team and the best advice I was given during this project was to take risks.

**I find that a lot of my favorite artists come from France and I have always wanted to ask a French artist what it is that makes France such an artistic country. Is there something in the culture that encourages artists?**

Firstly France has one of the oldest cultures

in the world, which for me is really influential to talented artists. Over the years we have found some amazing new artists all across Europe. They come from countries that have a lot of history, and if they absorb this when they are young it sticks with them through their professional career. Many of these talented European artists have left the continent to go to the United States for their careers. I liked the idea of moving to Canada and found a good life balance.

**One thing that I particularly noticed when looking at your stunning work is your**



© Image by Herve Groussin









© Image by Herve Groussin, courtesy of Ubisoft





© Image by Herve Groussin, courtesy of Ubisoft

**fantastic use of color and the amazing contrast you achieve. Do you have a formulaic approach to choosing color, like creating color sets etc., or do you go with what feels right at the time?**

For a long time I started my illustrations in color, because primarily I am a colorist. But recently I have been softer with colors and I try to use a simple process. I start in black and white to speed this up. I often return to painting in color very early in the design process as I'm comfortable with that.

I'm familiar with a lot of painters from the 18th and 19th century. I have studied the works

of those that I admire the most. For example, Rembrandt, Corot and Turner, as well as newer artists such as Syd Mead and Ralph McQuarrie. I admire these and other artists for their skills and use of composition. For me this is the hardest part to master, but it's the most important aspect of the image.

**You mentioned that you were a fan of some of the biggest and best-known painters from history. Do you ever do traditional art work?**

I have basic training in industrial design. I started painting when I was 10 years old. Since then I have not stopped drawing in all media, whether traditional or digital. I was exposed to

artists that I liked a lot when I was in France and I often went to the Louvre to see the works of Camille Corot.

I myself have worked at the Louvre. One summer I often had access to the galleries, so I spent the afternoons walking round the museum. I also took the opportunity to study the original work on display. Seeing them in real life was completely different to just seeing them in books or on the net. It made me want to do paint landscapes in oil.

My interest in digital art came along later and I found that the digital medium easier when I





Prince Of Persia : The Forgotten Sands

© Image by Herve Groussin, courtesy of Ubisoft

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wanted to work on fantasy or science fiction images. Having said that, I miss doing traditional art and I'm seriously thinking about getting back to it.

**“Even though I work digitally I still draw on paper first”**

**Can you explain a little about your approach to creating concepts in a professional environment? Do you get much time to spend on a piece? How do you balance quality with time restraints?**

My creative method is as follows: I often begin by using color, but for speed I work in black and white to show the ideas to the art director. When I have settled on a pleasing composition I try to bring it to life and create a really strong image. I always try to capture personality or emotion in my image. Even though I work digitally I still draw on paper first. Then I move on to allow time to let the concept mature. Later I select one of my concepts for further investigation. At this point I re-define the composition and light and start working on the details.

Finally I concentrate on making the image appear as uncluttered as possible. Often in the process I show the progress images to the art director so he can start to advise the modelers. I often work closely with modelers to help

them understand what they cannot see in the concepts. I also explain my approach to painting the environment so that it is easier for them to turn them into a 3D model.



© Image by Herve Groussin









© Image by Herve Groussin, courtesy of Ubisoft

**Do you know much about modern 3D techniques and does this help you work alongside 3D artists?**

Before I became a concept artist/illustrator I was a 3D artist. Many artists online say they are concept artists and would like to work in this field, but often they don't really understand 3D technology and how to produce a video game.

**"I find it a lot less stressful when I do my own personal designs, as it helps me to be more creative in my job"**

There are technical constraints that must be taken into account. We must not forget that we are here to create, assist and support the production of video games. We create the concepts and ideas, not the final product. You must always remember that the purpose of the concept is to help a 3D artist create the game and levels within it.

The games industry is huge and has to take into account the consumer and marketing process. We sell millions of copies of games, so concept

artists need to understand how all of these different aspects are dealt with from the start.

**I noticed that your personal work seems to differ in style slightly to your professional work, in that your personal work seems to be looser and more painterly. Is this style your preference, or is it just that sometimes it's nice to experiment a bit when you get the opportunity?**

I find it a lot less stressful when I do my own personal designs, as it helps me to be more creative in my job. It often helps me to think of new ideas so I'm not just looking at a blank page! I create science fiction or fantasy environments, although right now I am concentrating on fantasy. I like places with a

strong historical background as they inspire me to create imaginary scenarios.

**As you mentioned earlier, France is a country with a strong culture and history. Do you find that this history inspires you when creating environments?**

France still inspires me today and is an important element for me. As I said earlier, I had the chance to work at the Louvre. By living close to Paris and being able to visit this museum regularly I was particularly inspired. I learned a great deal about the French culture and history, but I also use the net to research other cultures such as Chinese, Thai, and Egyptian. This gives me access to a lot of information and inspiration that I can use within my own work.



© Image by Herve Groussin, courtesy of Ubisoft









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Thanks for taking the time to chat to us and  
for sharing your stunning work with our  
readers.

Herve Groussin

For more information please visit:

<http://www.nuro-art.com/>

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[nurofen\\_92@hotmail.com](mailto:nurofen_92@hotmail.com)

Interview by: Simon Morse

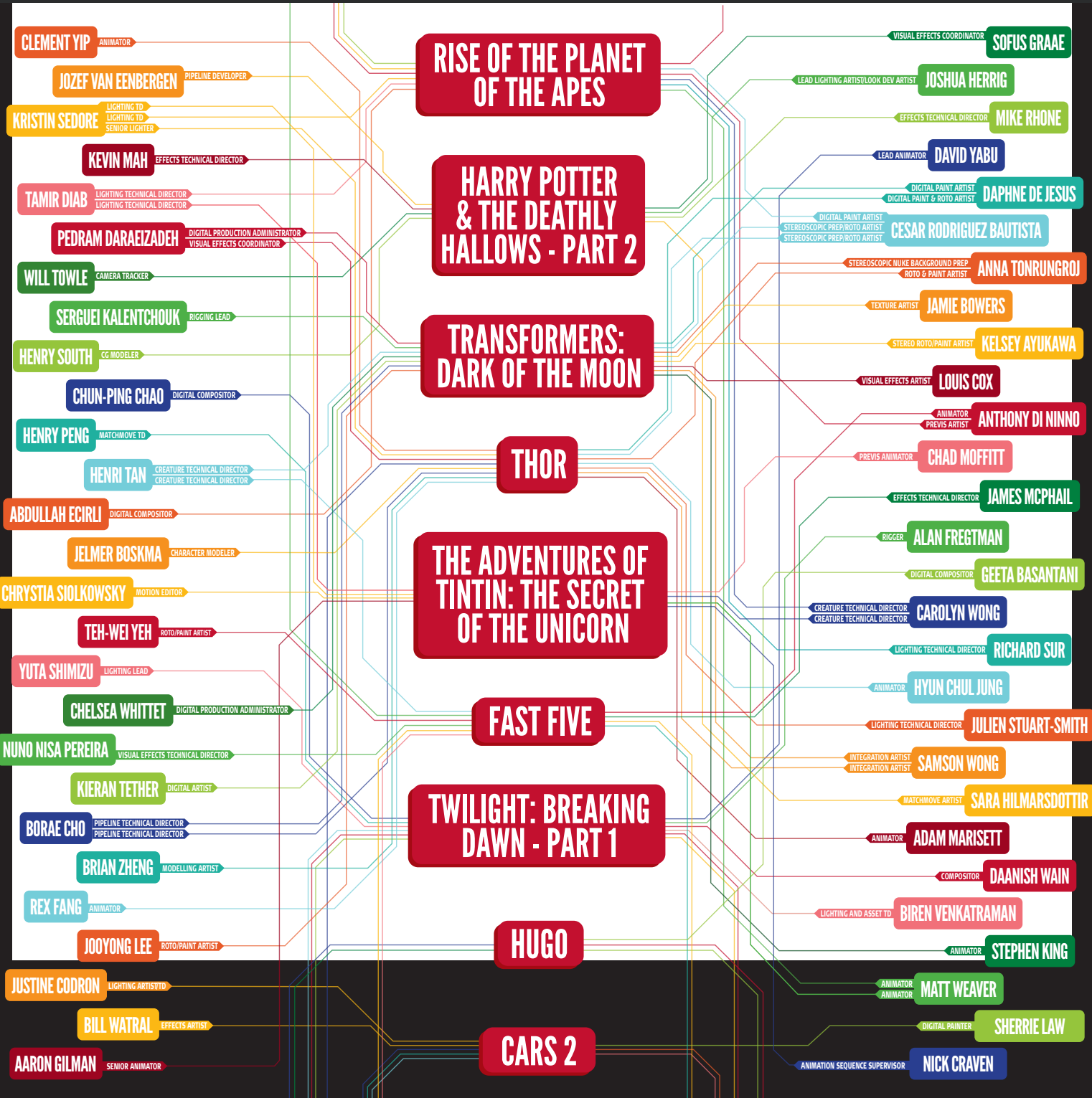




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# SKETCHBOOK of Herman Ng

This month's diverse and exciting sketchbook gives us an insight into the creative mind of China-based concept artist, Herman Ng. Herman has experience in many fields of the CG industry and this truly shows through in his stunning, varied sketchbook images.





## Sketchbook of Herman Ng

My first sketch is of a team who are trying to survive in a polluted, post-apocalyptic world. Each of them has their own special power and looks after their teammates (**Fig.01**).

In **Fig.02** you can see a mutated monster affected by radiation. It has extra bodies growing out of its back and shoulder, and each part of him attacks in a different way.



**Fig.03** shows tribal people who live and hunt in the desert. After they have killed their prey they use its poison to enhance their own physical strength.





In **Fig.04** you can see a group of bandits traveling around crazily, trying to rob or kill anything that gets in their way.



This image shows a demon queen in a temple, deep inside the forest, defending her territory by playing sinister melodies. She is ready to kill anything that gets too close (**Fig.05**).

In **Fig.06** you can see a couple of ideas of how an extremely powerful sorceress might look. She has given away her soul to obtain great supremacy.

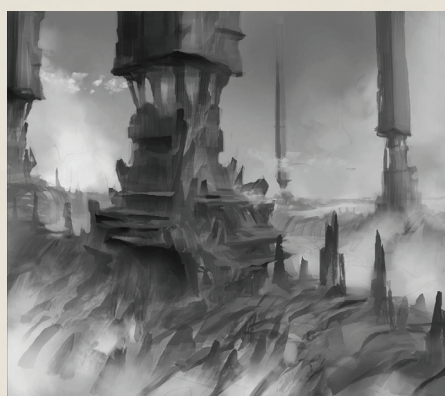




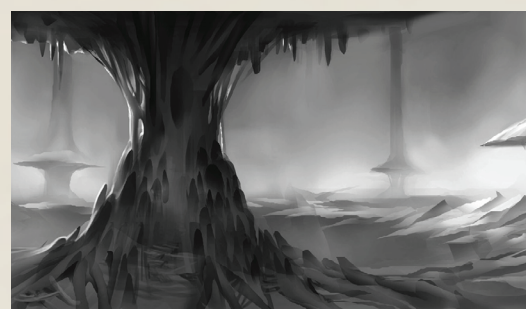


07

These two images above show a female warrior traveling through a mysterious mountain. They show how dark and intimidating the inside of the mountain is and how dramatic it looks from the outside (**Fig.07**).



**Fig.08** shows a few ideas I had for an ancient temple design. I thought of it as a place that once had a very spiritual race living inside it.



08





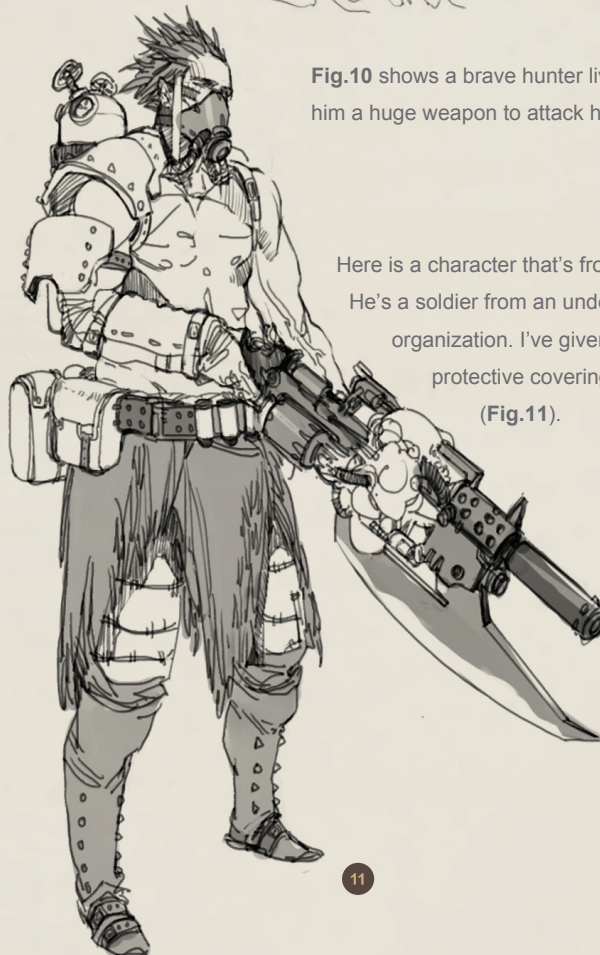
This female musician is one of God's servants. She creates beautiful music when she is ordered to play in different ceremonies (Fig.09).

09



10

Fig.10 shows a brave hunter living in a thick forest. I gave him a huge weapon to attack his giant, rhino-like prey.



Here is a character that's from a steampunk world. He's a soldier from an underground bounty hunter organization. I've given him a huge gun and protective covering on his body and face (Fig.11).

11



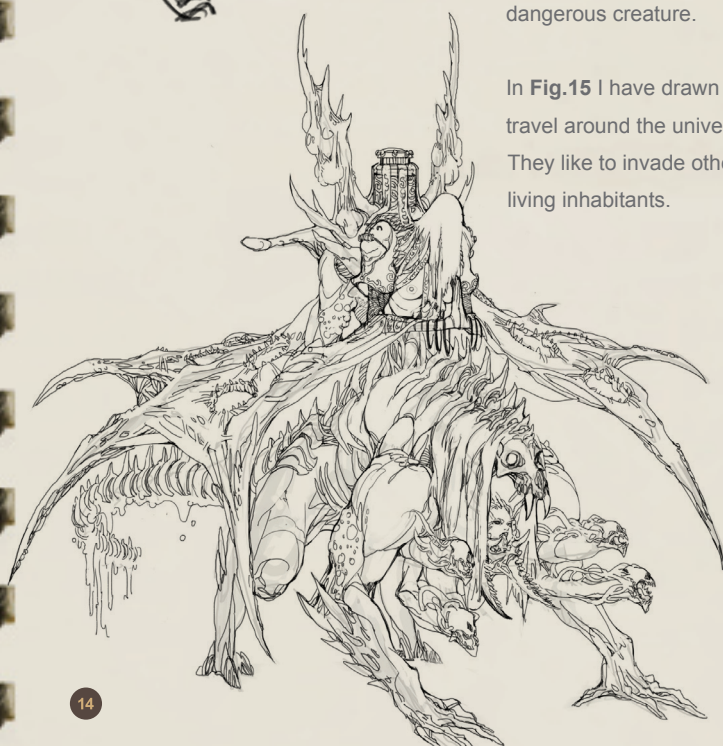
I later sketched a hero who travels around the world searching for the lost history of his race. You can see he too has armor and an enormous gun (Fig.12).



Fig.13 is of a powerful Orc that lives in a dark, wooded area. His civilization has evolved to wear armor and hold weaponry.



Fig.14 is a very dedicated monk who has finally become polluted by demons, and has been turned into this terrifying and dangerous creature.



In Fig.15 I have drawn some creatures that travel around the universe disguised as rocks. They like to invade other planets that have living inhabitants.







**Fig.16** shows my design process and how I experiment with differing styles when working on pre-production art. This is an example of moving from a realistic to an exaggerated style, then cartoony and finally a totally different cartoony character.

Finally **Fig.17** shows a design page to show some special effects and ideas for a game.

**Herman Ng**

For more information please visit:

<http://www.artbyherman.com>

Or contact him at:

[openanewworld1@gmail.com](mailto:openanewworld1@gmail.com)

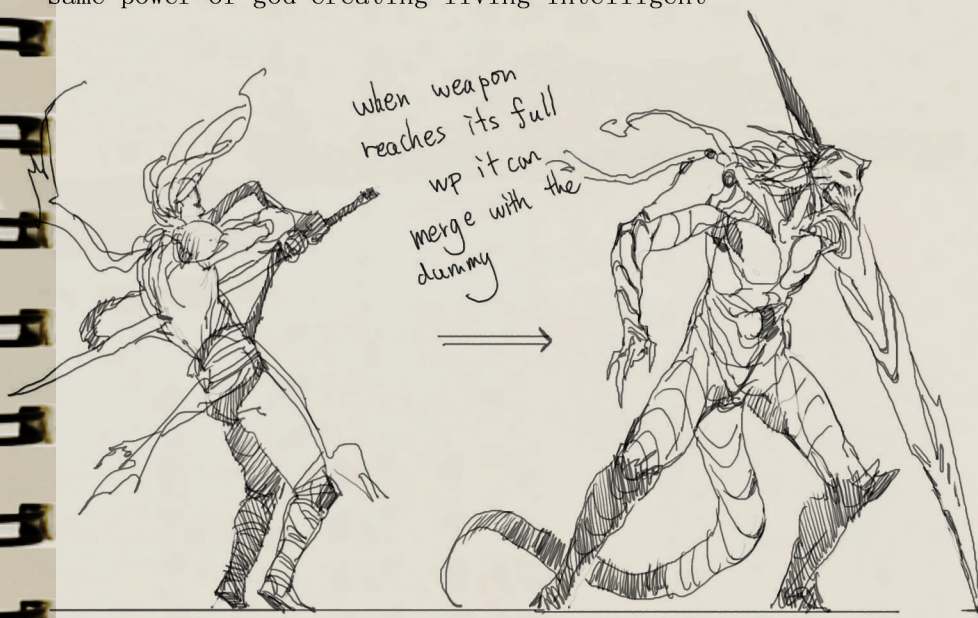




you are created by 女娲 but accidentally mixed the bloody with the original god 盘古, which allows you to have the same power of god creating living intelligent

? still havent figure out how it works game play wise

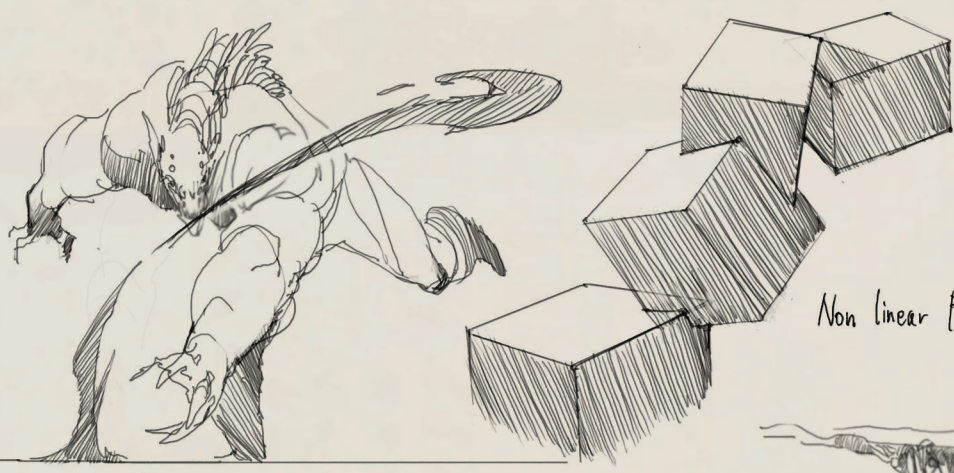
update weapon



only in the armor mode character can recharge the HP



Music Insurments can be outlined as they are important and very special creations by Gods



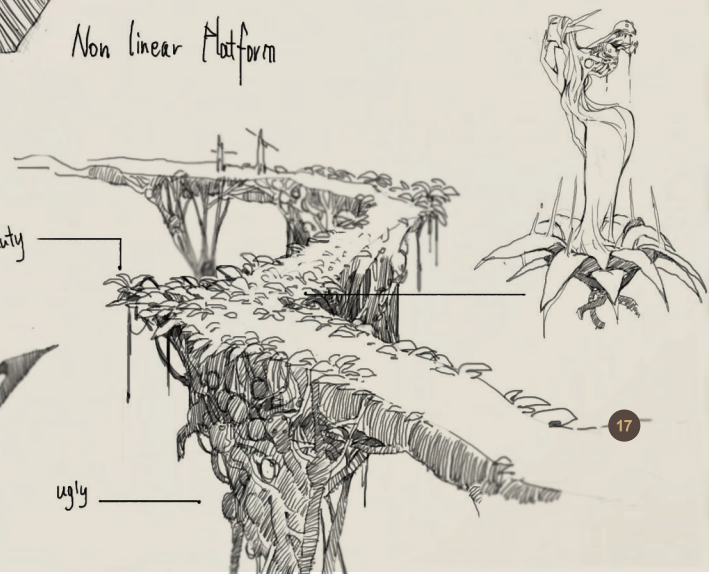
Non linear Platform



2 worlds light without light

Beauty

ugly







# THE GALLERY

**This month we feature:** Xavier Etchepare | Odile van der Stap | Bruno Hamzagic | Andrew Seleznev  
Roma Cherepov | DangMyLinh | Pavel Romanov | Yongjae Choi | Ivan Kashubo | Jordi Gonzalez





Lily

Odile van der Stap

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(Left)



Kimiko

Yongjae Choi

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# Persephone

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### Carnivorous Plant

**DangMyLinh**

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(Above)

### Polina

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(Top Right)

### Enemy

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(Bottom Right)











Video Game Concept

Xavier Etchepare

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# MANIAC

## HISTORICAL CHARACTERS



### CHAPTER 01 - GENGHIS KHAN

There are obviously many different styles of art that originate from different countries and cultures around the world. One of the most popular of these styles is what we know as manga. In this tutorial series we will be covering how to create our own manga characters using many of the recognizable features that we see in this style of art. Our tutor for this fantastic five-part series will be insanely talented artist **Patipat Asavasena**, who shows us at how to put his tips into practice whilst painting some super-cool manga historical characters.



## Chapter 01 – Genghis Khan

Software Used: Photoshop

### Introduction

My name is Patipat Asavasena and I'm a freelance artist living in Bangkok, Thailand. I'm really influenced by Japanese manga. You can visit my website [www.asuka111.net](http://www.asuka111.net) to see my work in full. In this tutorial I'll show you the process I used to create my image of Genghis Khan in a manga style.

I believe manga is a brilliant way to draw characters in a simple format, with more of a cartoon-like quality to them. Most of the manga art books out there have already explained the best technique for drawing a really good manga figure. However I still recommend that you learn the fundamental skills such as anatomy, realistic drawing and tonal value. If you don't have a solid foundation to your image it cannot be improved. There's no shortcut, so keep practicing and be patient!

### Designing the Character

To do a manga illustration you should do some research before you start. It's really easy to find some good resources on the internet. I love to look at reference books about the subject too. After I'd done this I was able to create a digital scrapbook from resources and information I found, and I used it as a reference sheet for my design (Fig.01 – 02).

Now and again I love to work on impulse. I like to use my own inspiration, or you could call it an improvisational method. Unfortunately I cannot do this when I'm working with a client as it may not meet their personal expectations. This is why I need to come up with a rough idea beforehand that the client is happy with. Only then can I move on to the next stage.

### Planning the Composition

Then I have to think about the composition of all the different elements in the image. For example, characters, backgrounds and props. I



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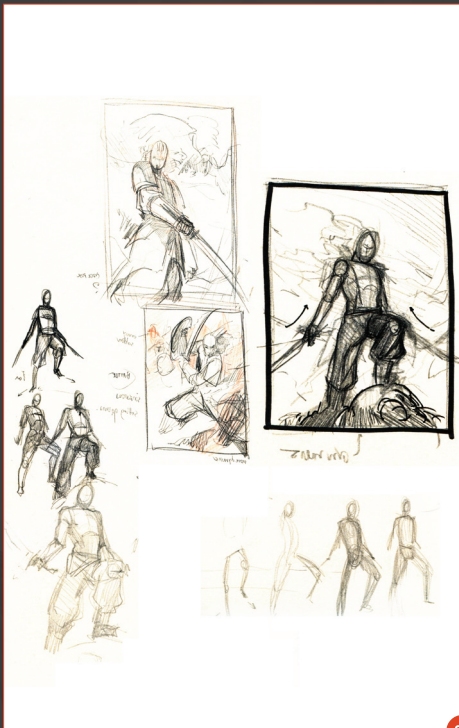


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also have to think about design fundamentals, such as the value contrast and focal point. I try to come up with a simple design, because it gives a clear idea and readability of the image to the audience.

To design the composition for this image I used a small thumbnail sketch to visualize my idea. I imagined the overall canvas and then quickly sketched it out on paper. I took me roughly five minutes to create each sketch. I was able to





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take a break and come back to develop some of my favorite sketches further until I came up with a great idea (Fig.03).

### Refine the Thumbnail

You can see that I chose the thumbnail sketch I liked the best. I turned it into a digital format using Photoshop. I enlarged the thumbnail to fit it to my canvas size (A4, 300dpi). Still keeping it as a rough sketch, I started to refine it. The digital medium is great for editing! I tried experimenting a lot. I like tweaking color, scaling and transforming layers and color overlaying. If I save multiple versions then the client has lots of options to choose from (Fig.04).

### Rough Sketch

I then decreased the thumbnail layer's opacity and created a new layer on top. I developed the image into a more defined rough sketch for inking by drawing on the top layer. It's a bit like tracing on a light table (Fig.05).

### Inking

I would highly recommend using a pressure sensitive brush. I used a default Hard Round brush (10 – 15 pixels in size) to do the inking. You may have noticed that I used various line



Refined thumbnail



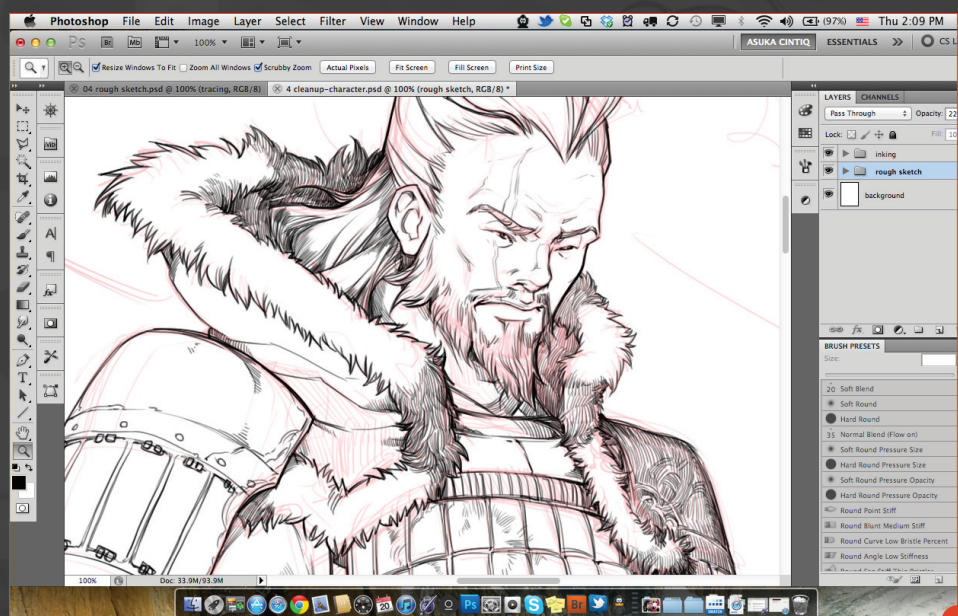
Color overlay

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weights to give depth to the image. I also did some hatching to create the tonal shading effect and texture (**Fig.06 – 07**).

## Canvas Preparation

Next I created the layers for a character in the foreground, a flag in the middle ground and the mountain and sky in the background. I used the Lasso tool and Fill command to fill the area of each layer with a color. I tried to make sure that each layer had different tonal values to give the image a sense of depth. I arranged the lower value (the darker area) in the foreground and higher value (lighter area) in the background. This developed a backlighting effect and brought a more dramatic mood to the image. Then I used a soft brush to overlay the simple color on each layer to match the thumbnail (**Fig.08 – 09**).

**Tip:** Turn on Preserve Layer Transparency to make sure that you can only paint on the opaque area of that layer.

## Painting the Background

Now I could start to work on the background layer. I found some good reference images from my own personal photos, but I didn't just copy and paste them into my canvas. With reference photos I find it helps to put them on a secondary monitor or a notice board so I can keep referring to them as I paint.







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I didn't worry about the flag and mountain layer as much because they only had a small area in the canvas. I tried to maintain a good tonal value throughout and kept slightly less contrast between these layers. Both had a higher contrast than the character in the foreground to make sure they looked separate and to show depth. When I'm painting a new image like this I zoom out to see the whole thing and compare it to the thumbnail. This allows me to make sure I haven't developed the image in a different direction to how I had previously planned.

### Painting the Character

Again I tried to match the overall image to the thumbnail as I painted, but also had some flexibility to change or add some extra details. For example, I changed some parts of the character's costume color to a slightly bluer hue. I also added some minor detail to the armor so it looked slightly damaged (Fig.10 – 14).

### Touch-up

At this point I created some adjustment layers so I could do some fine-tuning (e.g., curves, brightness and contrast, color balance etc.). This is a non-destructive method of editing an image and allows you to come back to it later and change or remove some of the adjustments. You can see this in Fig.15.



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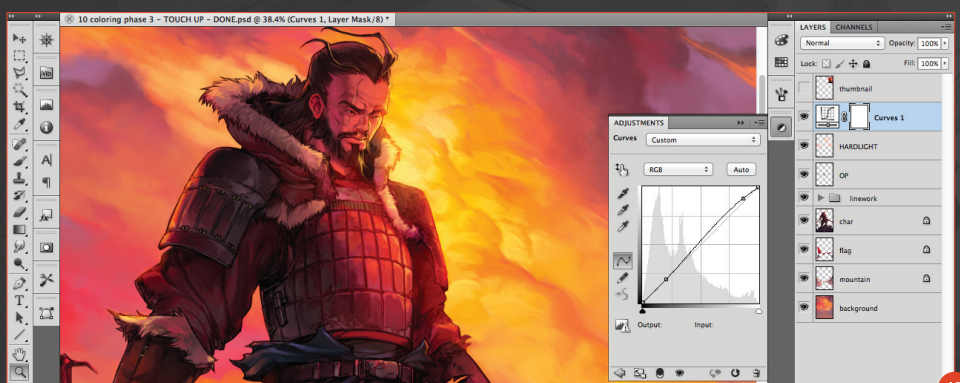
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### Summary

Finally, my version of the great Genghis Khan in a manga style was finished! This took me about 10 to 13 hours (Fig.16). I hope this tutorial has

provided you with some inspirational ideas or helpful information. I encourage you to create your own masterpiece. Thank you very much and I hope to see you again in the next tutorial.



Patipat Asavasena

For more information please visit:

<http://asuka111.net/>

Or contact them at:

[digiemo@gmail.com](mailto:digiemo@gmail.com)







# DREAMSCAPE



CREATING LIVE-ACTION ANIMATIONS. USING 2D PAINTINGS AND COMPOSITING TECHNIQUES

The *Dreamscape* animation is an amazing project led by regular 2DArtist magazine contributor, Jama Jurabaev. In this tutorial series Jama will be walking us through the processes that he and his team used to create this mind-blowing short. From concepts and storyboards through to live-action compositing, no rock is left unturned as Jama explains how you too can use some simple tricks and methods to create professional quality, live-action animations without needing a professional budget.

To see the *Dreamscape* animation in full, check out **Issue 075 of 2DArtist magazine which features Part 1 of this series.**





## Matte Painting

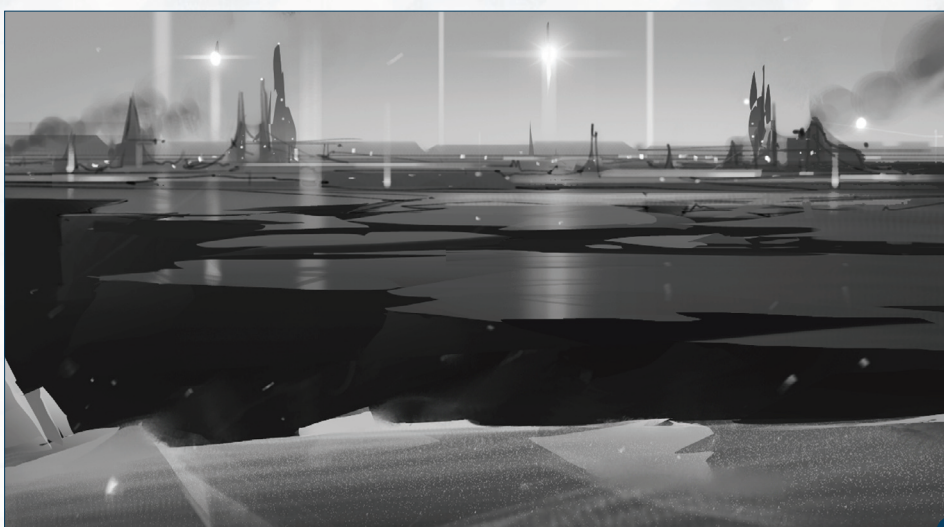
Software Used: Photoshop

This is the second chapter in the *Dreamscape* animation series. I covered concept art and storyboard creation for animation in the first chapter, and in this one I will share some useful tips about matte painting.

A matte painting is a realistic environment that can be used as both the background and middle ground in an image. Although this does not have to be photorealistic, it must be consistent in terms of light and perspective. It can be fully painted, photo manipulated or a mixture of both. When matte paintings are used in films or animations the foreground is usually made up of live-action shots together with 3D elements, but as I was short on time I decided to use matte paintings for the foreground as well.

After I had finished my storyboard (which was covered in the first chapter) I focused on creating a dozen highly detailed matte paintings. This took me about a month to complete, and although it was time-consuming and sometimes a very laborious process, I knew that these would save me a lot of time later on at the animation stage.

There are a few things that I would highly recommend before you start working on any matte painting. Firstly, it is very important



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to have a sketch. It doesn't have to be very detailed and beautifully drawn, but you have to define basic composition as it will be very hard to manipulate and rearrange when you have a lot of detail and photo elements.

Secondly, try to use or buy your own photos. I have a huge library of images that I've taken of different parts of my country. There are a lot of internet resources, such as 3DTotal.com, cgtextures.com and shutterstock.com, where artists are able to get high quality textures and photos from.

Thirdly, don't forget these matte paintings are to be used in an animation. They don't have to be fully detailed, pixel perfect or finished illustrations.

Using the storyboard from the first chapter, I started to create an environment covered with ice and polluted by endless factories. On the horizon we see spaceships leaving earth to go off in search of a better home elsewhere (Fig.01).



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When I was happy with the sketch I wanted to concentrate on the color palette and composition. I began adding color elements to the canvas along with photos and different lighting effects. In **Fig.02 – 04** you can see some of my experiments before I settled on my final design. I decided that a mixture of Fig.02 and Fig.03 looked promising, but I kept on experimenting and ended up with **Fig.05**.

As I mentioned earlier, for this project I mainly used photos from my own library or photos that were kindly provided by my workmates and friends. You'll see in my reference photos (**Fig.06 – 08**) that I had a collection of ideal pictures of fluffy rain clouds and factory smoke that I could incorporate into my digital matte painting. I also tried a variety of different skies.

I added the cloud photos to the image and moved them around and adjusted them, trying out a variety of skies. Whilst I was doing this I used color adjustments to make sure the sky looked consistent and believable (**Fig.09 – 10**).



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I then changed the overall color palette to match my initial mood sketches (Fig.11).

At this point I had a good base established so I started adding the smaller details. Overall it took me about five days to finish this piece (Fig.12).

Following the same process as described here, I created many other pieces as backdrops for my animation (Fig.13 – 18).

Matte painting needs serious time, patience and knowledge. I believe that it is far beyond

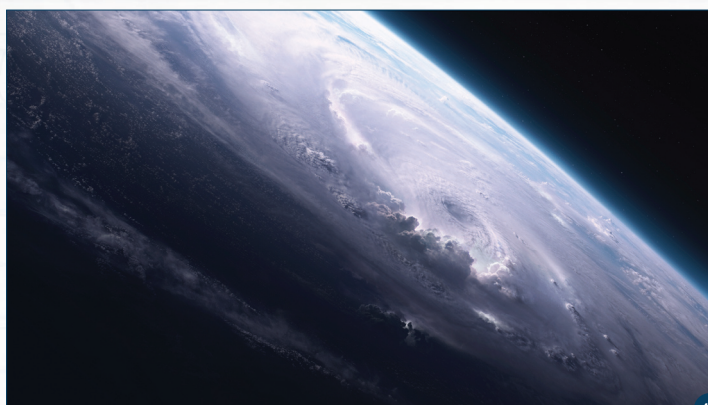
just photo manipulation and technical drawing.

There are many great artists that use this technique, and the quality of their art proves the merits and potential of this method. Good examples of these artists are Dylan Cole and Yanick Dusseault.





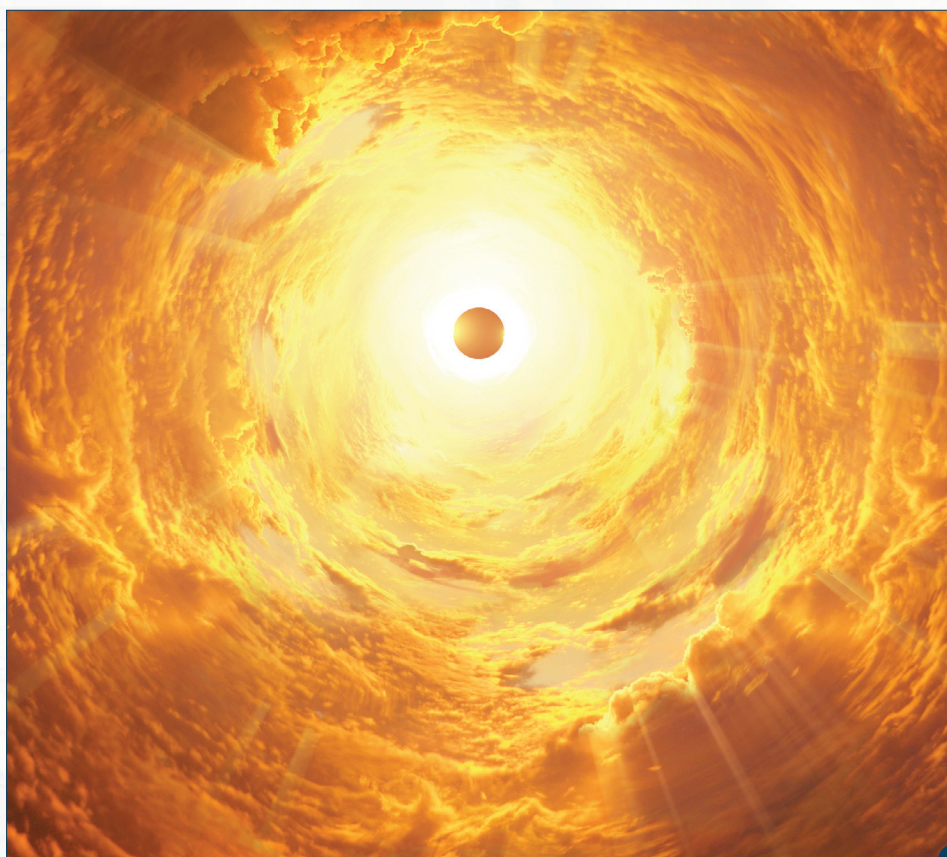
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To create successful matte paintings, knowing essentials such as composition, color harmony and other art fundamentals is much more important than learning how to use a piece of software. That is why in most of my tutorials I try to avoid explaining technical information about Photoshop or 3D, because it is much more important to understand the fundamentals behind the artwork. It is more beneficial to learn about how to make good artistic decisions than how to use specific tools. In the next chapter we will look at how to add life to matte paintings using live footage.

Thank you for reading this tutorial and please email me any questions you may have!

### Jama Jurabaev

For more information please visit:

<http://jamajurabaev.daportfolio.com/>

Or contact them at:

[jama\\_art@tag.tj](mailto:jama_art@tag.tj)

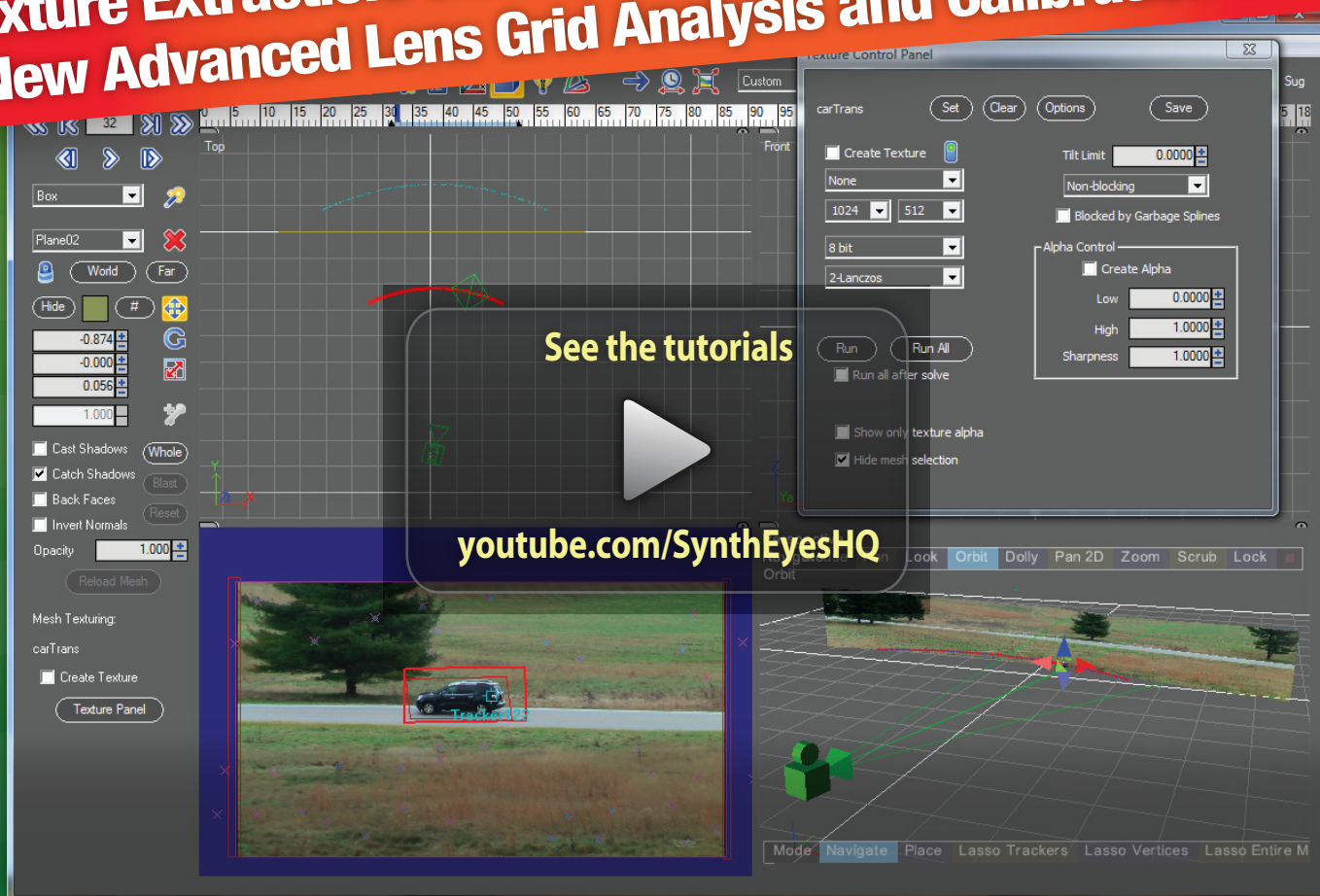




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# DESIGNING DROIDS



Digital art has its place in many industries, but none of these rely on it as much as the games industry! Obviously games are made of many elements, but you could argue that the most important element of any game is the characters. In this tutorial series our artists will be showing us how to design droids as if they were doing it within the games industry. This will involve them coming up with the design and showing you how to develop it to the point where they will even show you how to create the technical drawings for a 3D modeler!

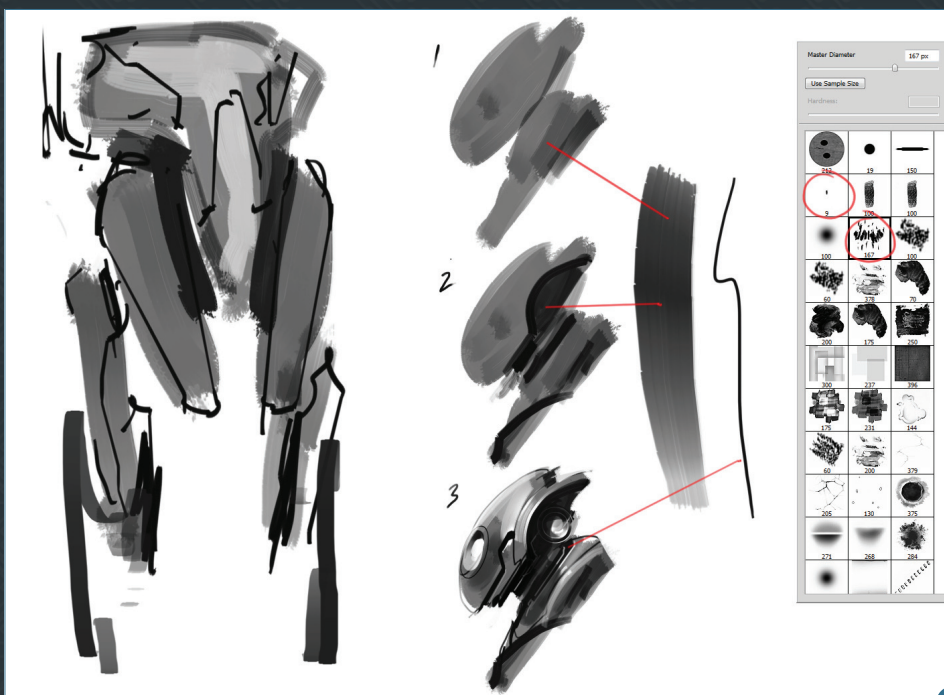
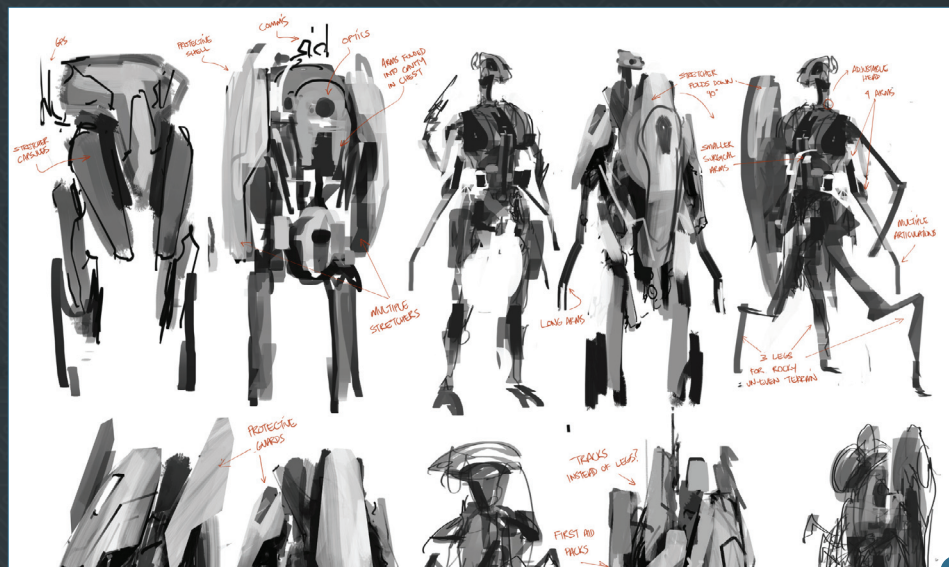
**/AEDI DROID**



Software Used: Photoshop

In my opinion, the most important things to learn when working for a game developer are how to follow a brief, and how to develop a style or closely follow an existing one. A concept artist's job is not only to come up with something visually appealing, but, more importantly, it's to create an asset that is functional, scientifically viable or at least believable and which is based on the parameters of the game's plot. A process needs to be followed that enables the art director (AD) to give ample feedback throughout the development and that also makes the 3D modelers' jobs as easy as possible. The more information supplied to the modelers, the faster the model moves through production. The concept artist has a huge responsibility early on, hence the importance of following a solid design pipeline.

I've written a short brief similar to that which an AD would supply. The following steps are based on a pipeline that – in its most basic form – can be found in any game company. This method is one that has worked well for me. I've also added approximate times for a typical work day as a rough guide to what is expected. Some artists are slower and some are faster, but this is roughly the pace I work at.



The AD has requested a medical droid for the front line level of our game. The setting is Earth, approximately 2050, and a variety of droids assist military efforts on the front line. The medical droids are used to assist injured troops and they have GPS and communication abilities to locate injured soldiers. Every soldier has an encrypted tracking device that links them with the medical droid and this device is activated when needed. The primary function of the medical droids is to locate and assist the injured soldiers and, if need be, operate on location and safely transport the injured back to base.

In terms of design, the droids should be futuristic, but not too slick and curvy, and still in-keeping with current military designs. Some organic shapes should be present for specialty areas, but they need a mostly hard and solid construction. Special metals and hard plastics should be used.

You can't always hope for an in-depth brief, but basically the more information you have up-front the better your design is going to suit the game, therefore hugely cutting down on revisions and even do-over's.

Research is the part I really enjoy. I learn about all sorts of subjects I would never usually read about. It's also the best place to start. To assist you in your research, it's a good idea to first break down the brief into key words. That way you will cover everything in your design.

Here is my interpretation of the key brief points:

- Year 2050
- Front-line military medical droid
- Some curves, but mostly rigid construction
- Main appendages protected with high density composite cowling



Should have the following:

- Visible GPS and communications systems
- Transportation device for injured soldier (possibly stretcher)
- Arms to perform tasks such as lifting body, moving debris and performing surgery
- Audio and optical

At this point I then start looking for references on Google Images, using key words that address each of the bullet points from the brief breakdown; army medic, military surgeon, military robot, army stretcher, medical robot and so on. I then compile all of the reference images into one in Photoshop (PS) and place it on my second monitor. That way, it's always there so I don't stray too far from the brief when working on my thumbnails.

### Day One: 11:00am to 12:30pm – Thumbnails: First Stage

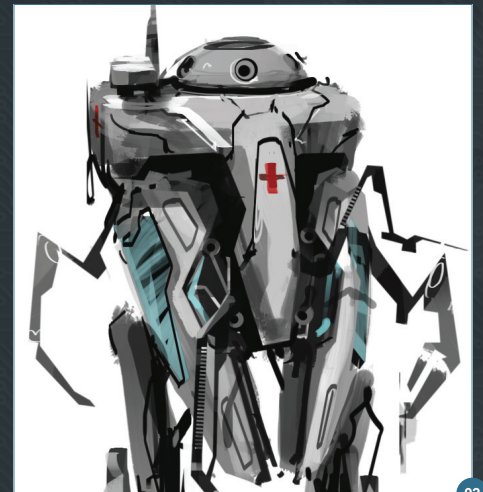
When starting thumbnails it can be difficult to get past the initial blank page. It's important to let your ideas flow onto the page without judgement or over-thought. Otherwise you can get caught up in the details on a single concept and before you know it, two hours have passed. The panic of a deadline sets in and productivity drops.

There are many methods of starting thumbnails, from blocking-in silhouettes to using random

shape brushes. The method I prefer is simply to use a large brush to block in rough shapes and then define them with quick lines and shadows. To save time when selecting brushes, I put the ones I use the most at the top of the brush selector menu (**Fig.01**).

I usually start with an A4 landscape page and rough out about six to eight shapes in two rows (**Fig.02**). I try to make each thumbnail different, but sometimes find that once the first few shapes are created, an idea starts to form and this stops the flow of new ideas. It's difficult to move past the urge to do variations on a single design, but it's a good idea to try. Some ideas will be terrible, but it's important to work through as many as you can. It's just as useful to show ideas that don't work as ones that do. Bad designs also make the good ideas stand out. If a co-worker comes to look at your progress, it's much better to have a page of rough scribbles than only a few detailed ones. The AD will be able to see your thought process and let you know if you are heading in the right direction. It's a starting point and if the direction changes, you haven't wasted much time on detail and can quickly amend the roughs.

When working in a games studio, it's common for leads and ADs to be watching your progress from their own desks over the network. It's handy to add little notes to reinforce what you



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are thinking so your working drawings are not misinterpreted early on. You could save your initial work locally of course, but leads often ask for you to work on the server for this reason. So, it's quicker to scribble a few notes as you go, or even paste an image to show what textures you are thinking of rather than painting it.

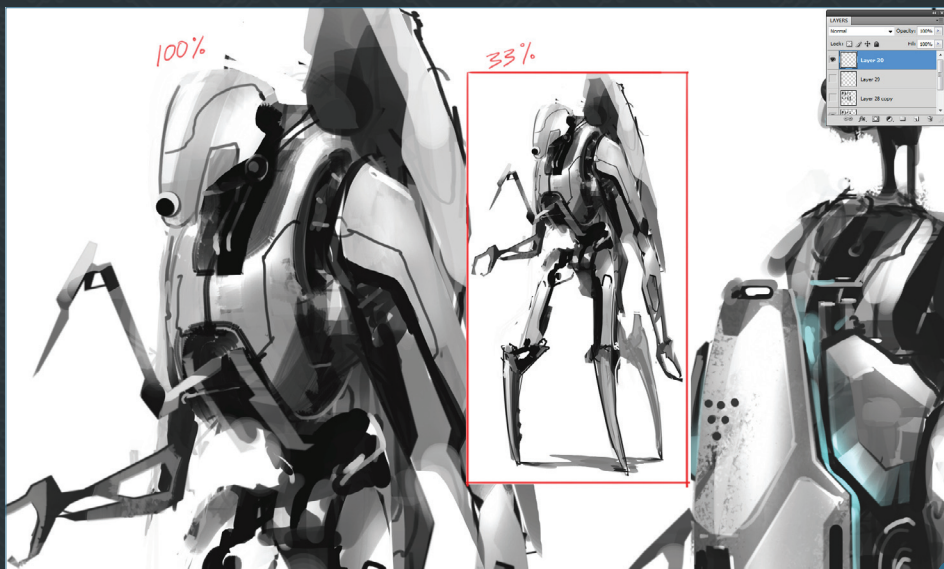
### Day One: 12:30pm to 1:30pm – Lunch

### Day One: 1:30pm to 5:00pm – Thumbnails: Second Stage

Once you feel you have some good ideas down and the lead is happy for you to continue, you can add some detail and better define the shapes and surfaces.

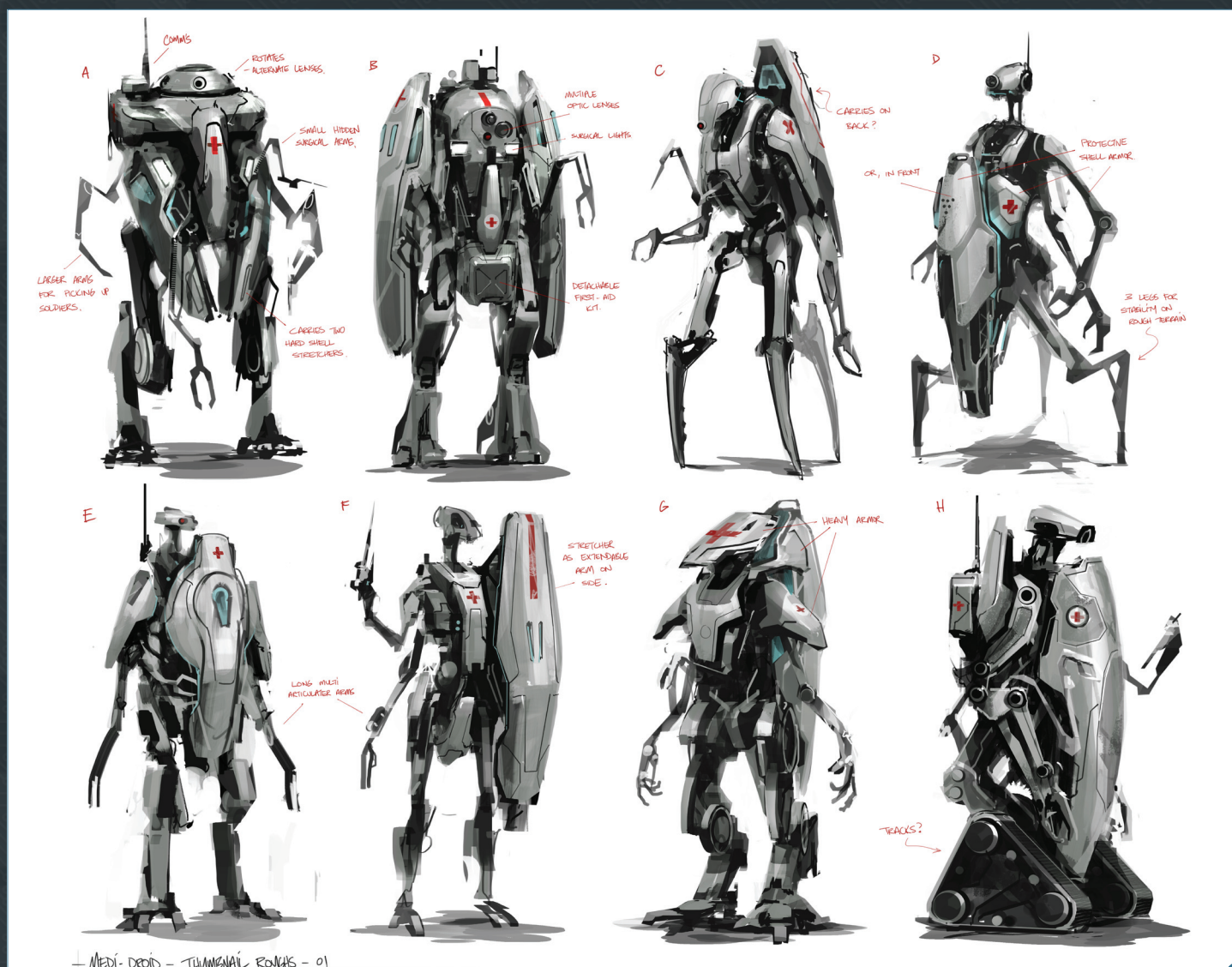
A method I use a lot when I'm painting digitally is to first break the object into readable chunks of light and dark values; light being the main chunk or section of an object, and dark being the recessed area in between (**Fig.03**). I do this by using the Polygonal Lasso tool (L) to mask an area. Using a large flat brush I then lay in some basic values, similar to that of a base 3D model with global lighting. I then invert the selection using Shift + Control + I and block in the darker areas. At this stage I'm working at 33% zoom.

**Fig.04** shows a comparison between 100% and 33%. I find it easier this way to keep an eye on how the design is reading as an object from a distance, and to determine how the light and



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dark areas contrast with each other. Any closer than this and the detail is largely pointless as thumbnails are often only viewed all at once on a screen or printed onto an A4 page. No one is going to be zooming in to look at detail at this point. Thumbnails are about the basic design.

Once the basic shapes are defined, I can then suggest detail with quick lines and break up the panels with joins and creases. It's good to use a few simple colors to hint at decals, glass and artificial light sources. I then lay in shadows with a large flat brush using complete black at 100% opacity. If you don't press too hard, you will achieve a nice shadow effect with single strokes. The standard Round Flat brush does a good job for this, but I find that textured brushes such as Chalk just as well.

To add highlights I like to start with a flattened layer. Select all (Ctrl + A), then Copy Merge (Shift + Ctrl + C), then Paste (Ctrl + V). I do this because I use the Dodge Tool for highlights and I like it to affect all of the layers.

Using an airbrush with the range set to Mid-tones, I drop in some quick down light. I then change the range to Highlights and use a smaller brush to pick out high contrast areas. I like to add extreme light right next to shadow areas, which emulates a trick that light plays on the eye. If the objects are looking too washed out here, I create an adjustment layer set to Selective Color. I then set the colors to whites in the menu and slide up the black until the balance is right, maybe introducing a little bit of yellow as well.

To finish off it's always good to add some notes if you haven't done so already and label the thumbnails with letters or numbers. This makes it easier for the AD to let you know which ones are preferable (**Fig.05**).

## End of Day One – Meeting with AD

### Day Two: 9:00am to 10:30am - Finalize Design Choice

By this point the AD will have looked over your roughs and hopefully made a selection; either one particular design with possible amendments, or a combination of thumbnails. For example, he might like the top of A, with the bottom of D and the arms of E. For the purpose of this exercise, D was chosen as a suitable rough to work up.



## Day Two: 10:30am onwards – Front and Back ¾ Renders

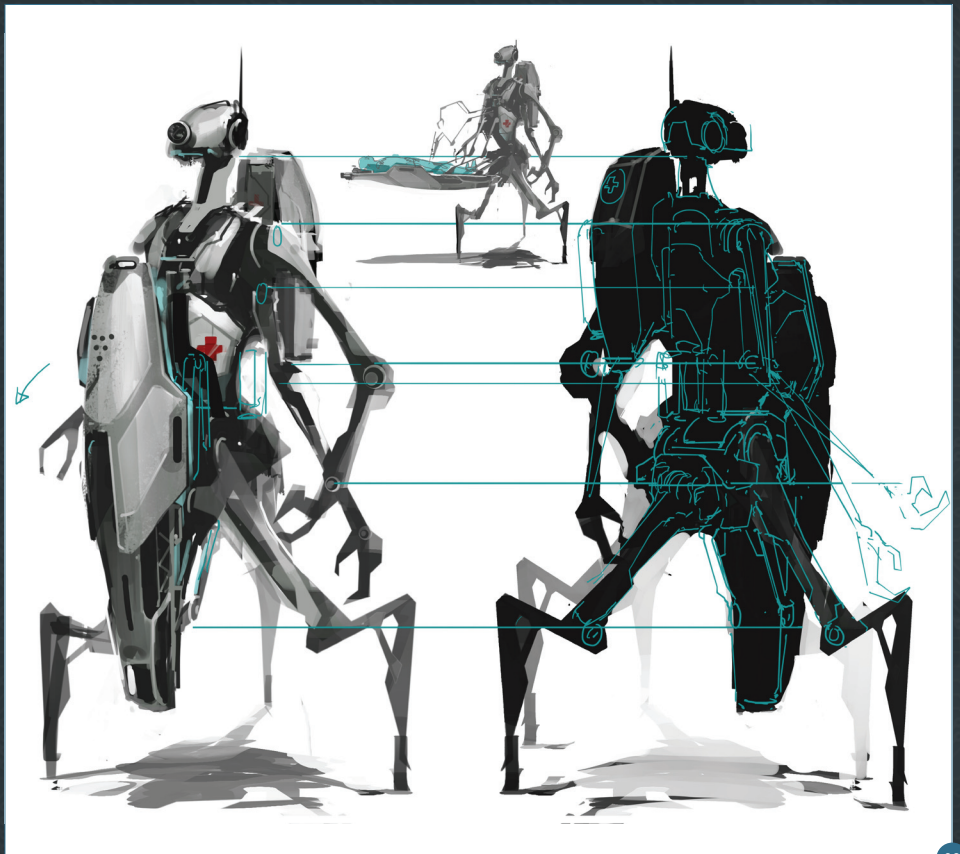
The first thing I do when working up a thumbnail into a final front and back ¾ view is roughly plan out both views beside each other. I find it's important to do this early on as it helps to determine if the back works well with the front in its present state. It also allows me to see if I've missed anything in the front view that should be visible. I try to make the front/back perspective as straight on as possible to make it easier to do the orthographic views later.

The fastest way to do this is to simply copy the thumbnail and flip it horizontally. Then, by dropping the brightness and contrast to black, it's easier to imagine that you are looking at the object from the back (much like a silhouette), as there are no details to fool you otherwise.

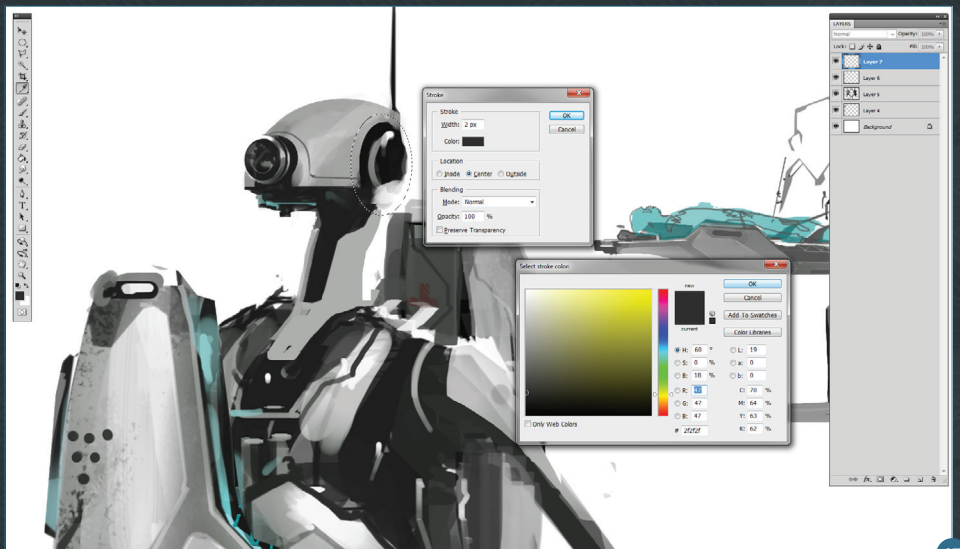
By running lines across from key points on the thumbnail drawing, you can determine where things are placed on the back view. I also do a quick render of the medical droid with the stretcher down and the soldier inside being operated on. This gives me a good idea of what parts I need to add in order for this design to function (**Fig.06**).

The next task is to paint in the front view using the same method as described earlier in the thumbnail section, but taking more care to render surfaces a bit more smoothly. It's at this stage that I basically clean up all of the shapes and start to make sense of how the parts fit together. I often use the Elliptical Marquee tool (M) as a mask tool for arcs and circles. The thinner lines are created using the stroke function, as shown in **Fig.07**. I use Transform Selection to make the mask bigger or smaller and also the Modify/Expand and Contract function for irregular shapes that don't transform that well.

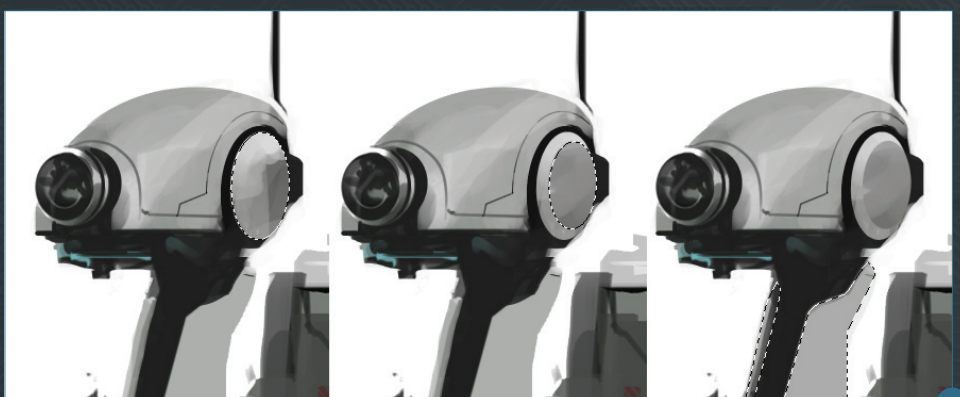
Using the shortcuts I've mentioned so far (selecting with the Lasso, blocking in value,



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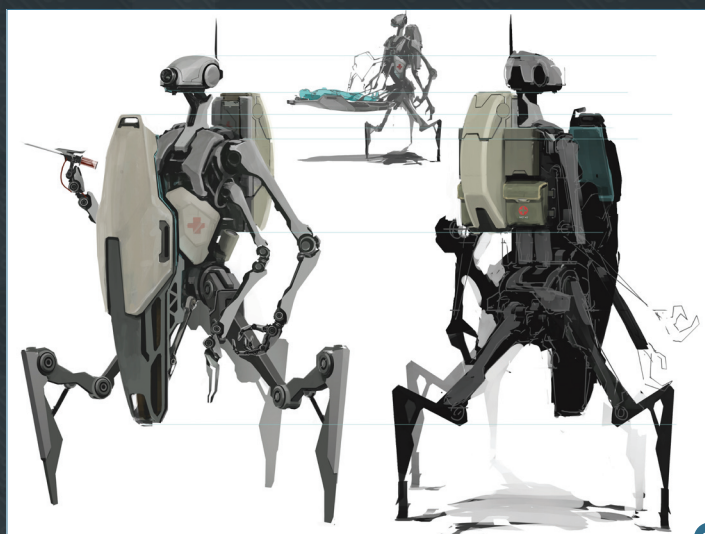


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inverting selection, blocking in value), rinse and repeat! I work my way down the image, cleaning everything up and solving any issues I find (Fig.08).

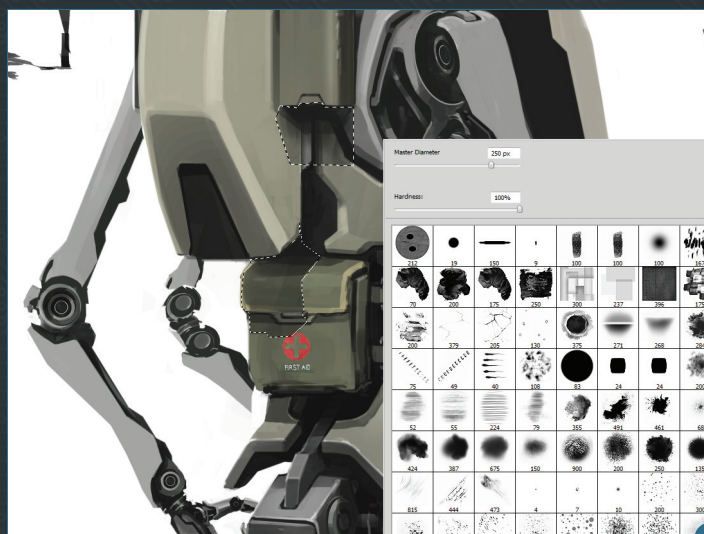
I do the same with the back view, constantly running guide lines across to see if everything matches up (Fig.09).

Shadows are created using a large flat brush as stated earlier, but this time I use the Lasso tool to more accurately select the areas (Fig.10).

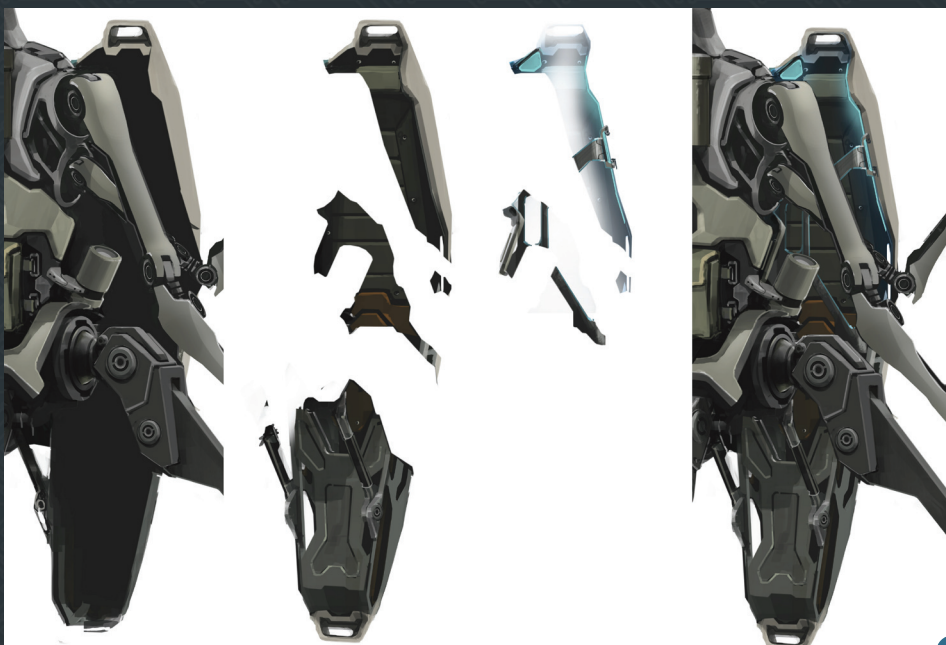
It's good practice to keep sections of detail on separate layers. That way it's easy to select specific parts, and add lighting or make changes later on (Fig.11).

It is then time for another clean-up pass and to add more detail lines and joins, making sure all of the surfaces are the right color and all of the points match up from front to back (Fig.12). I find that a good way to achieve crease lines is to take a flat brush and turn off Other Dynamics in the brush pre-sets. You can then hold down Shift while you are drawing a line and just keep clicking from point to point. I use this a lot.

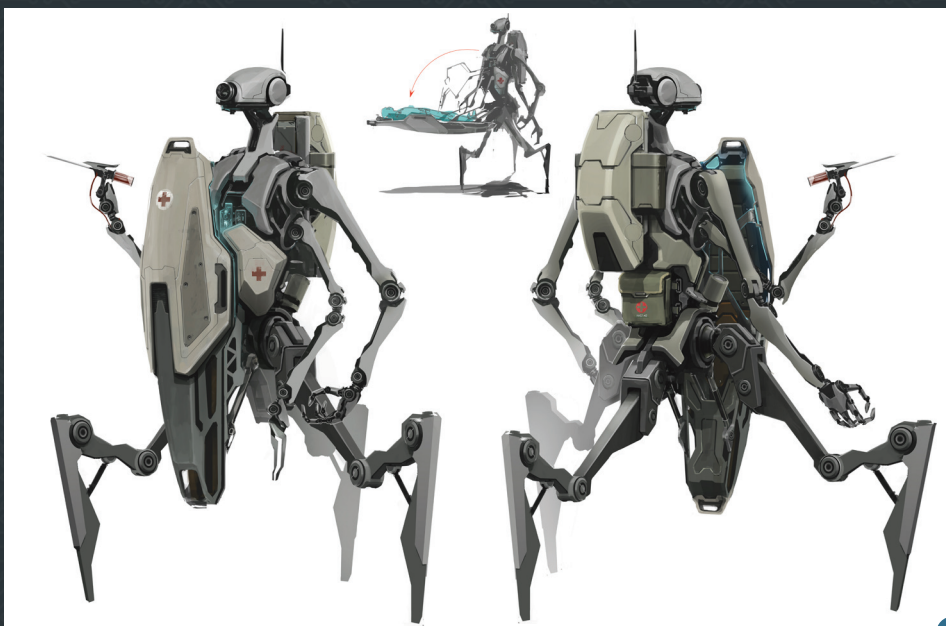
I finish the front and back renders by adding some metal and grunge textures using a Multiply layer, and paint in scratches, dents and decals. Finally I flatten the layers and use the Dodge tool to add highlights, like I stated earlier. A drop



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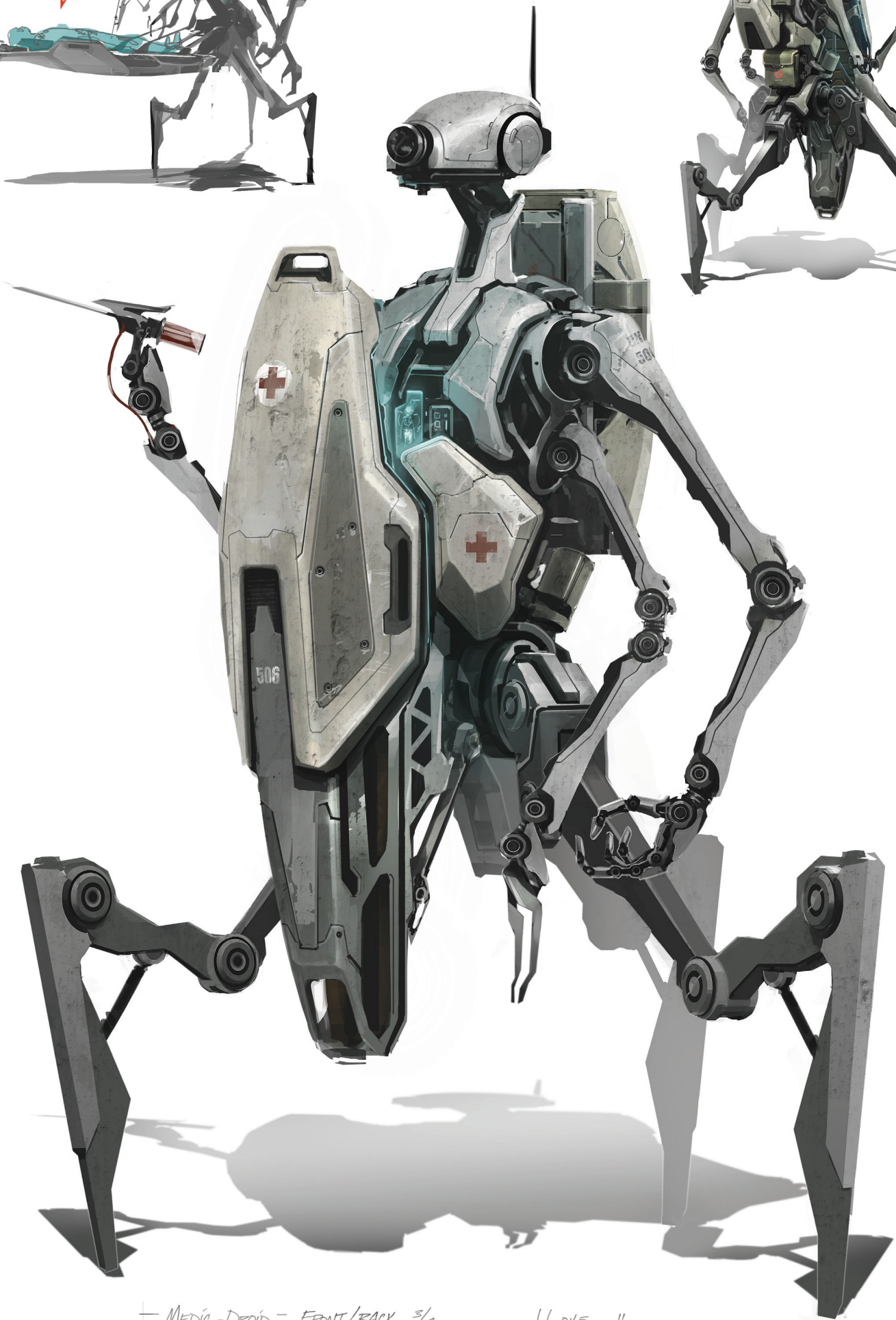
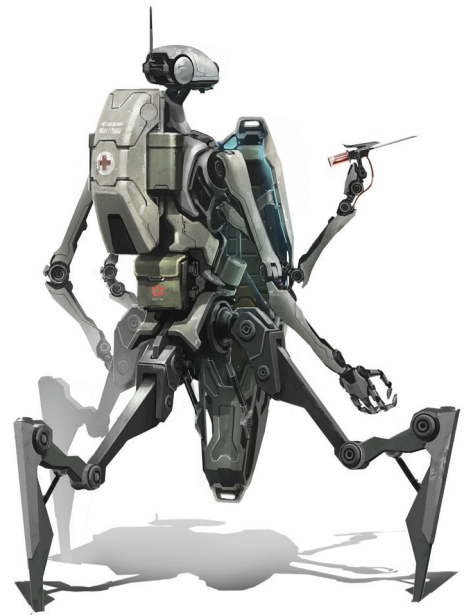
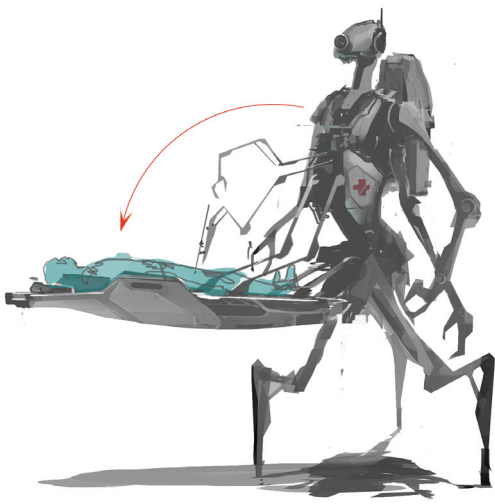


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— MEDIC-DROID — FRONT/BACK 3/4

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shadow is created by making a Load Selection of the robot and using Transform Selection > Distort to change the perspective to ground level. A simple gray fade and it's done (**Fig.13**).

Sometimes it's a good idea to add samples of the texture references you've used in boxes to the side of your renders. This is to make sure that the modelers know exactly what type of materials you would like to use for each surface. Even if you render the object beautifully, it can still be misconstrued as another texture.

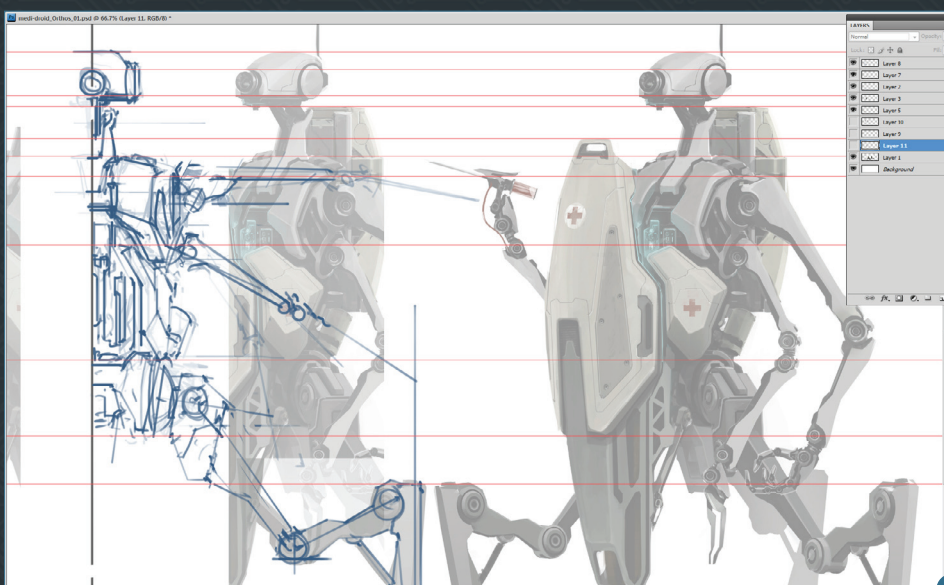
## Day Three: 9:00am onwards – Orthographic Views

Orthographic sheets are where all your hard work will pay off. If you have designed your object well, then this stage should hopefully be a walk in the park.

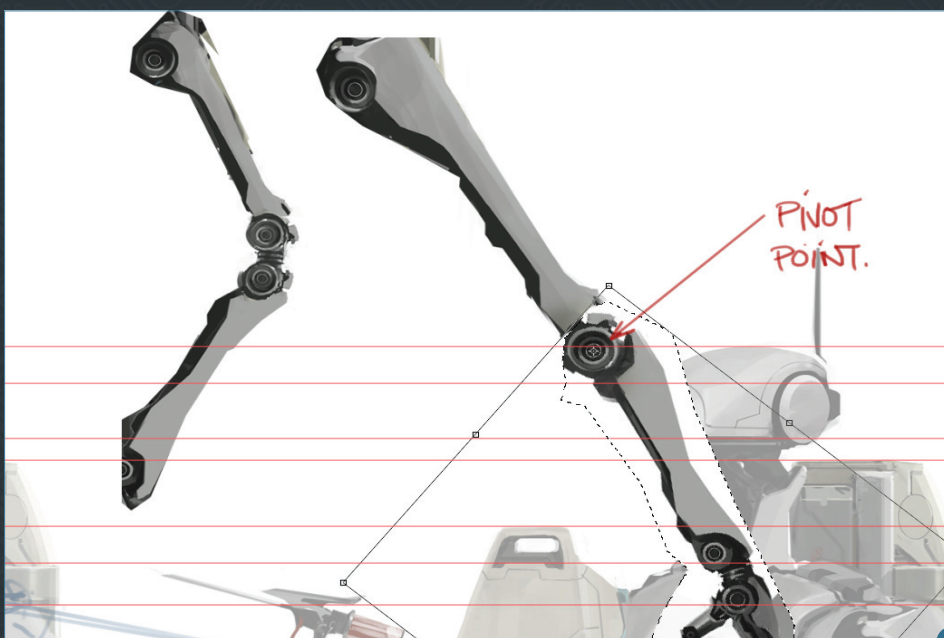
I start off by placing the front ¾ render onto the page and dropping the opacity right down. I then drop in some guidelines at key points, similar to when I was doing the back ¾ view. Rough lines are used initially to get an idea of where sections sit and how the model translates into a front view. I try to imagine the model turning slowly in order to get an idea of how the shapes appear when facing straight-on to the viewer. Basically the side planes will become thinner and the front planes wider. You can even select some of the larger shapes from the ¾ view, drag them across and widen them slightly as something to start from (**Fig.14**).

When I'm rendering the ¾ views, I keep in mind that it would be handy to have some of the arms and legs close to the correct plane for orthographic use. This way I can simply paste them in and draw over them. The arms are bent in places so I straighten them out by moving the pivot point in Transform mode so I can rotate the arm from the right spot (**Fig.15**).

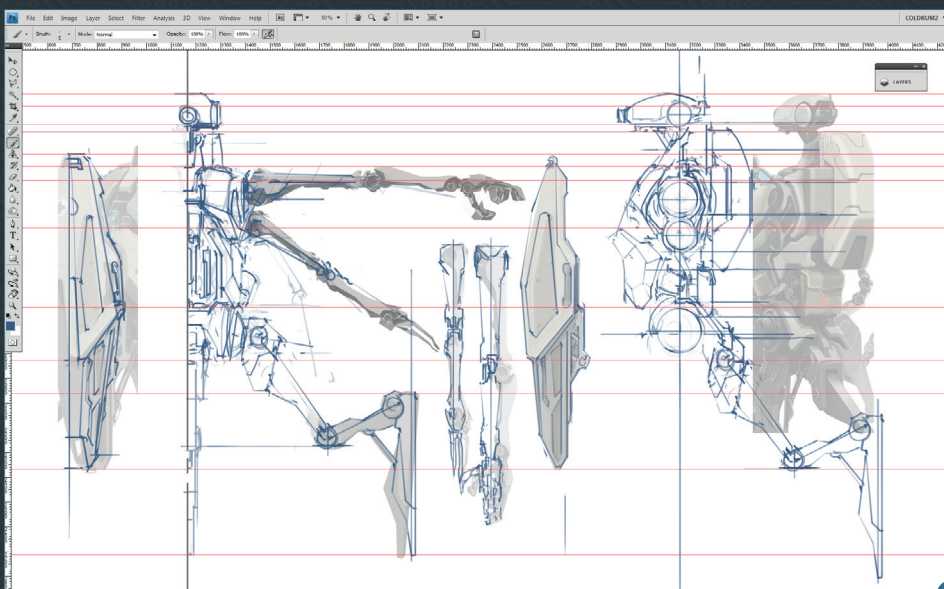
It's important to show the arms straight and have the legs side-on so that the modeler can use them to model from properly. Movable



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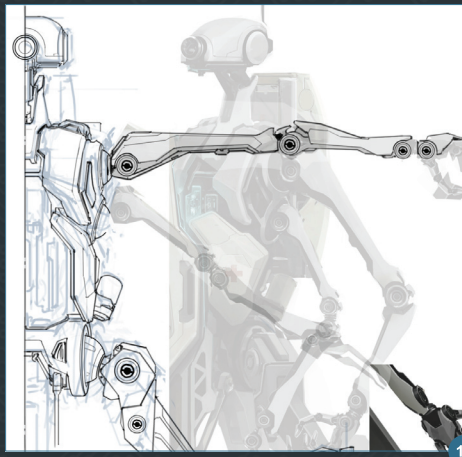


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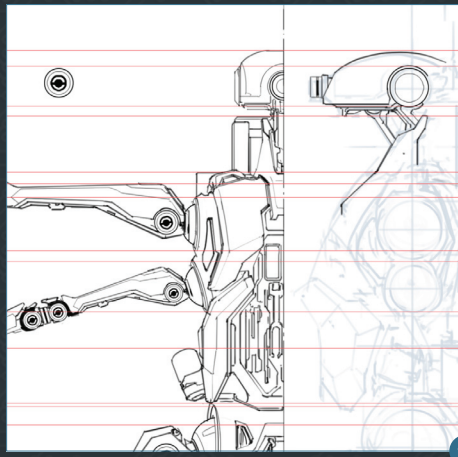


sections that cover the object, such as the stretcher and the arms, should be removed and drawn separately so that detail can be added behind them (**Fig.16**).

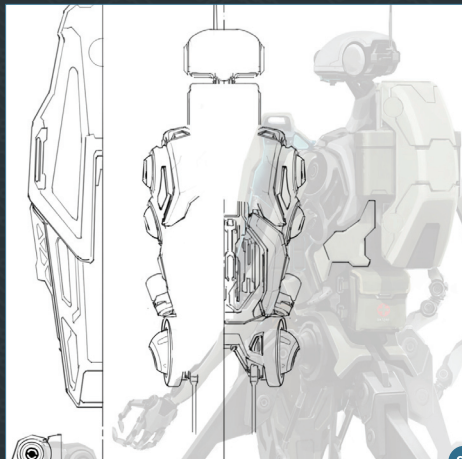
To get an idea about whether the front half is correct, mirror the image and make sure everything looks good before continuing. I've found that when doing orthos in the past, everything looks good until I mirror it, and it always seems to have a chunk missing out of the middle, especially with faces (**Fig.17**).



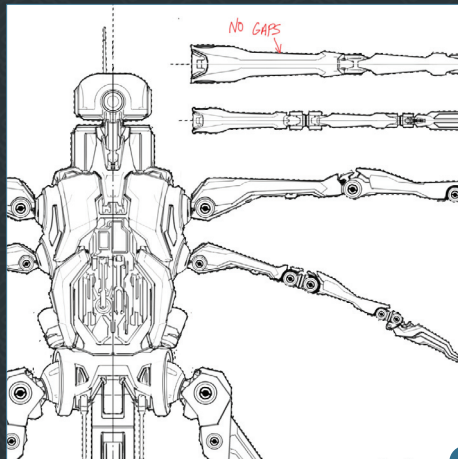
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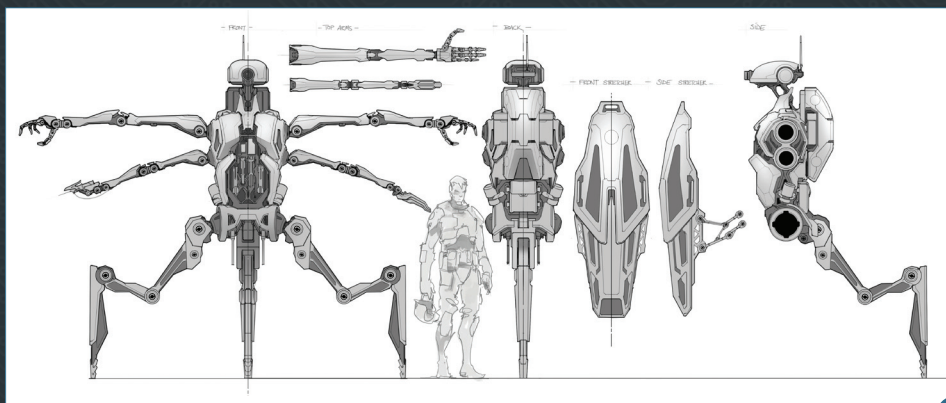
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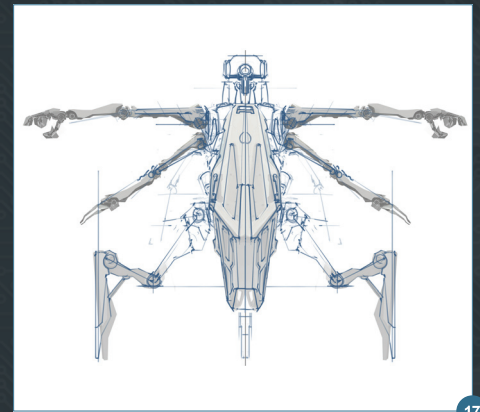
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Once I have everything laid out, it's time to drop in the final linework. This is simply a matter of being more precise with lines and making certain that all points match up in all of the views as best as I can (**Fig.18**). It's not crucial to get everything spot on, as the 3D artists are usually very good and can fill in the gaps. Although it's nice to get it close!

When doing the side view, it's a good idea to have it as close to the front view as possible so you can easily eyeball back and forth to see



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where things should be going. It would take too long to make this an exact match, but as long as it's close, the modelers will love you for it (**Fig.19**).

If the arms and legs are the same on both sides, it's not always necessary to draw them twice. So I've left them off the back view to save space on the page for other sections. In **Fig.20** you can see that I've simply drawn over a shape from the back ¾ render and will just drag it across and manipulate it if necessary. The more views you do, the more problems you will start to find, so it's a continual process of moving lines around to make everything work.

Once I've finished the linework, I make sure that there are no gaps in the outer perimeter by drawing a single thick line around the whole drawing (**Fig.21**). The reason for doing this is so that I can then use the Magic Wand tool (W) to select the empty white space around the droid. Once this is selected, I then invert the selection using Shift + Ctrl + I, create a new Multiply layer and fill it with a light gray. I then lock the gray layer and paint in some darker areas using the Lasso tool. Finally, I use the Dodge tool to add a small amount of light for curved surfaces, label the views "Front", "Back", "Side" etc., and it's done. It's also a good idea to add a human figure for scale reference (**Fig.22**).

If you have time, sometimes it's nice to do a quick painting of the object in its proposed environment. This will help sell the idea and also be a good addition to your portfolio (**Fig.23**)!



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# PAINTING CREATURES FROM MYTHOLOGY



Myths, legends and fantasy creatures have always been influential when it comes to digital art. In fact, many artists will never really stray too far from these sorts of themes and ideas. In this series a selection of stunning artists will be taking this popular subject and exploring some of its more diverse and lesser known characters. Throughout the series each artist will be given a brief for a character which they will need to interpret and turn into an illustration. To make things a little more interesting this will be done by not one but two artists, one using Photoshop and the other using Painter. This will not only show some of the differences between the two pieces of software, but will also show how the same brief can be interpreted in two different ways. This month **Andrei Pervukhin** and **Simon Dominic Brewer** tackle the **Mamalarang**.





## Chapter 4: Mamalarang

Software Used: Photoshop

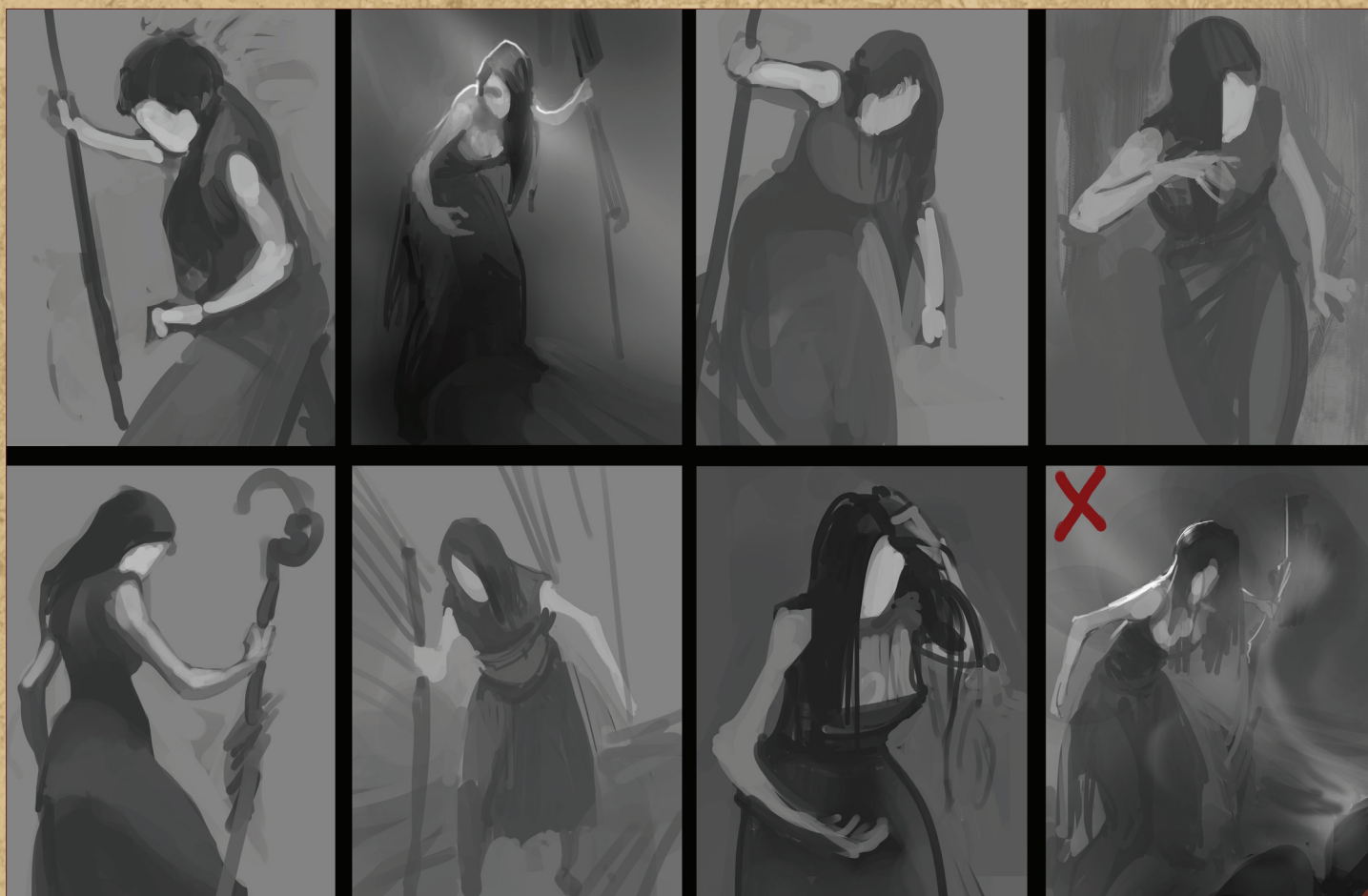
The mamalarang is a mythological creature from the Philippines. She is a witch who uses insects and spirits to enter the body of any person she hates. Mamalarangs are ordinary human beings who use black magic to torture and kill their victims, by infesting their bodies with insects. Although similar, they are different

to mangkukulams, who only inflict pain or illness. Mamalarangs use a strand of hair from their chosen victim and tie it to the bug or worm that they will use as a medium, almost like a voodoo doll. When they prick the bug, the victim immediately experiences the intended effect.

When I started this painting I did a Google search of Filipino clothing to help inspire me throughout the painting of this character. With

my references next to me I painted a few fast sketches to help me choose a pose for the witch and to position her on the page as the focal point (**Fig.01**).

Then I went on to develop the composition of my selected sketch and added some of the basic details. Working just in black and white at this point I started to develop the main character and the background. It's easier to work in black and







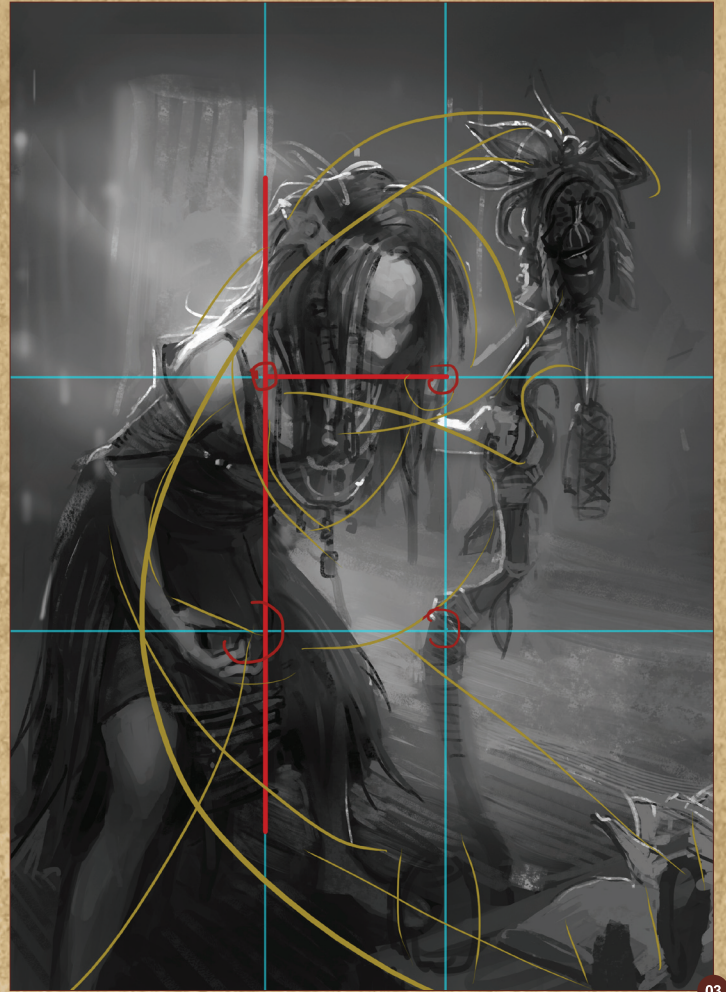
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white at this point, as it helps you focus on the form rather than the colors (**Fig.02**).

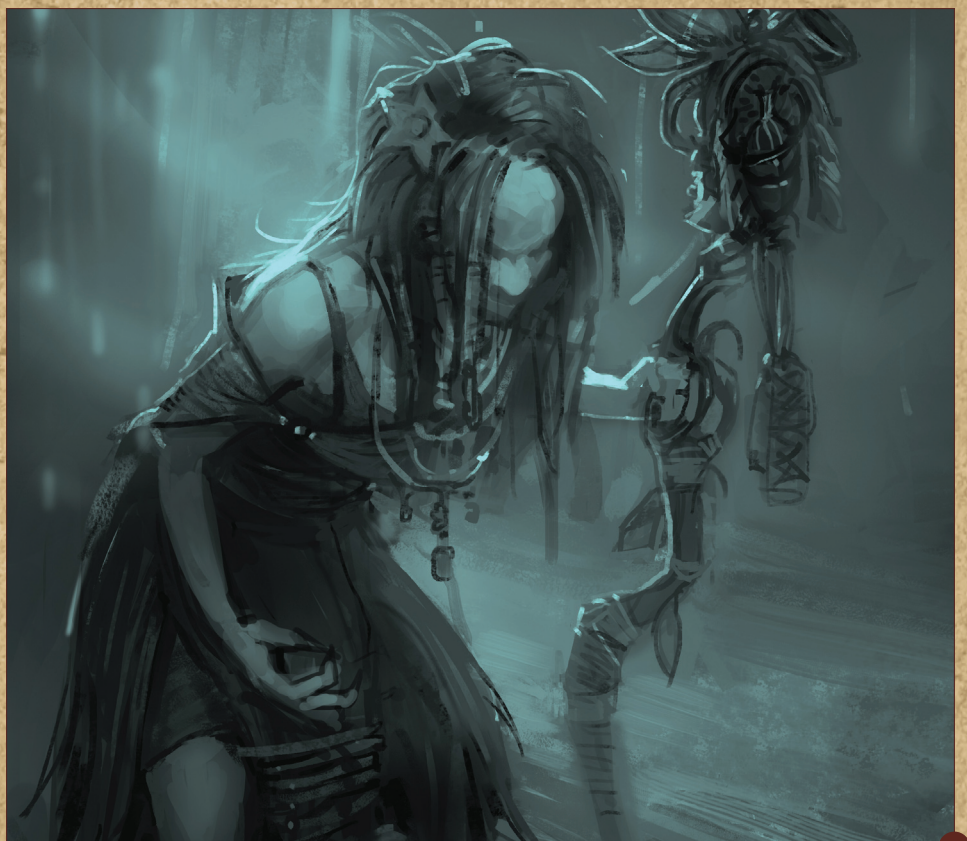
When designing this image I used some of the classic rules of composition, such as the golden section, as you can see in **Fig.03**. The areas where the blue lines intersect are highlighted red, which means there needs to be something of interest there. You'll also see the yellow lines, which draw your eye through the image in a curve that matches the pose of the witch.

I began to add color to the image by adding a greeny-blue layer on top (**Fig.04**). I used a Curves adjustment layer to make sure I was happy with the base before I added more color. Using Overlay, Soft Light and Multiply layers I added color and demonstrated depth. I then added highlights to the witch and different hues to separate her from the background (**Fig.05**).

Next, I started to add more detail to the painting. I concentrated mainly on her face and



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added emphasis to her nose, cheekbones and forehead by highlighting them to make her eyes feel dark and sinister (**Fig.06**). I also added some definition to her accessories, such as light from the background on her stick and her shoulder, again to add more depth to the image. I decided that her clothing wasn't quite right at this point, so I made some subtle changes (**Fig.07**).

As you can see in **Fig.08**, I added more detail to the witch, her stick and jewelry. I also added objects on the table in the foreground. I did all of this in a single Normal layer and then added warmer colors to reflect the light coming from the bottom right of the image.



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Once I was happy with the witch I turned my attention to the background and started to add some detail and texture. In a separate layer on top set to Normal mode, I added some highlights to the witch to integrate her into the scene. Then, using an Overlay layer on top of the image, I started to emphasize the colors that I wanted to look stronger (**Fig.09**).



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On separate layers I added flies, fire and hair on and around the book. You'll notice in **Fig.10** that some of the flies are motion blurred. To do this I simply selected the flies I wanted to blur using the Lasso tool and then went to Filter > Blur > Motion Blur and adjusted the settings accordingly. I created another Curves adjustment layer to make some minor adjustments to the whole image.

To conclude I created a new layer and filled it with a gray color (it was simply a 50% gray). I then applied a Noise filter and set it to 400%. I also added a layer, which I adjusted by going to Filter > Stylize > Diffuse, and set it on the top of the image in Soft Light mode, lowering the opacity to 15%. I would like to thank everyone for reading and hope you have enjoyed the article and it has proven helpful.

### Andrei Peruvkhin

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Or contact him at:

[earfirst@gmail.com](mailto:earfirst@gmail.com)



09









## Chapter 4: Mamalarang

Software Used: Painter

### Introduction

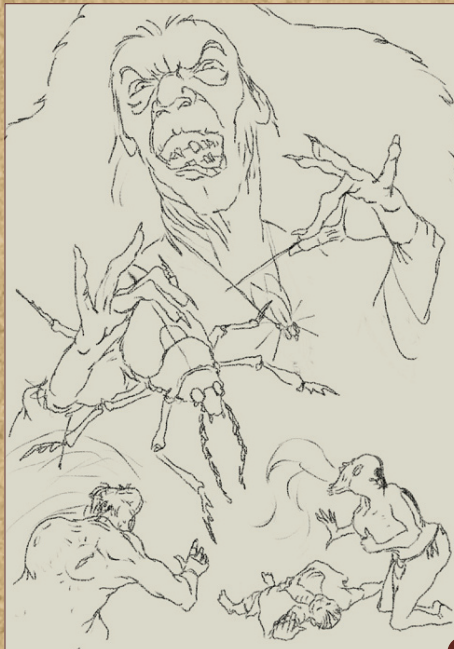
A mamalarang, so I'm told, is a witch who uses insects to infest the bodies of her enemies, eventually resulting in their death. She is of human appearance and her power lies in her insect magic. The mamalarang ties hair from her intended victims around a bug, and by jabbing the unfortunate creature with a pin she tortures her enemies with all sorts of insect-based nastiness.

Before I began I had a think about how I wanted to portray the mamalarang. It was important to get across the message of her primary characteristic, which is her ability to hex her enemy with bugs. I thought the best way to communicate this was to show her in "bug prodding" mode, alongside a selection of her victims who are feeling the effects.

I assumed she would perform this magic from a distance. This suggested a collage rather than a straight scene portrayal, so I knew I could show her and her victims in the same image. Furthermore, because her outward appearance is that of a human, I could show just her face and hands and not bother about the rest of her body.

### Outline Sketch

I created a small canvas of 1500 pixels in height with the same aspect ratio as my final image specification. I created a new layer to sketch out



my initial idea. In the upper half of the image I had the head and hands of the mamalarang. She is grasping a hefty beetle in one hand and getting ready to stab it with a needle.

I made the beetle oversized to make it clear what she was doing, and also as a way of adding interest to what would otherwise be a bland section of the canvas. Beneath her we have three unfortunate victims in varying states of insect infestation (**Fig.01**).

### Rough Value Sketch

I'm not particularly good at producing clean sketches right from the word go and that's why I often use multiple layers. I can sketch as many ideas as I need on successive layers and merge or delete the old sketches as I go. I created my



value sketch (lights and darks) and reduced the opacity of my outline sketch layer so I could use that as a guide. I created another layer on top of that and it was onto this new layer that I sketched my values.

Because my composition is based around a collage of two scenes I had two main light sources. One was for the mamalarang and one for her victims, whom I situated in a jungle. The mamalarang is illuminated with some up lighting, which emanates from an invisible light source somewhere between her hands. I illuminated the jungle scene from the top right and made a mental note to remember to simulate the dappled shadow effects of the trees and foliage when it came to the painting stage.



I also took the opportunity to revise my initial characters at the bottom of the canvas. My original sketches were too inhuman in appearance so I replaced them with some new guys. I wanted to give the impression that they were normal human beings whose bodies were bulging with emerging insects (Fig.02).

## Underpainting

I merged my outline sketch and my value sketch together so I had a single layer and a blank canvas. I created another layer in between the two and quickly painted my color scheme onto it using a pressure-dependent Artists' Oils brush with 50% grain. I often use color sets as my main method of selecting color. However this time I used only the Temporal Color palette, which I assigned to the \ key using Edit > Preferences > Customise Keys and choosing the Toggle Temporal Color Palette option under Other Shortcuts 9 (Fig.03).

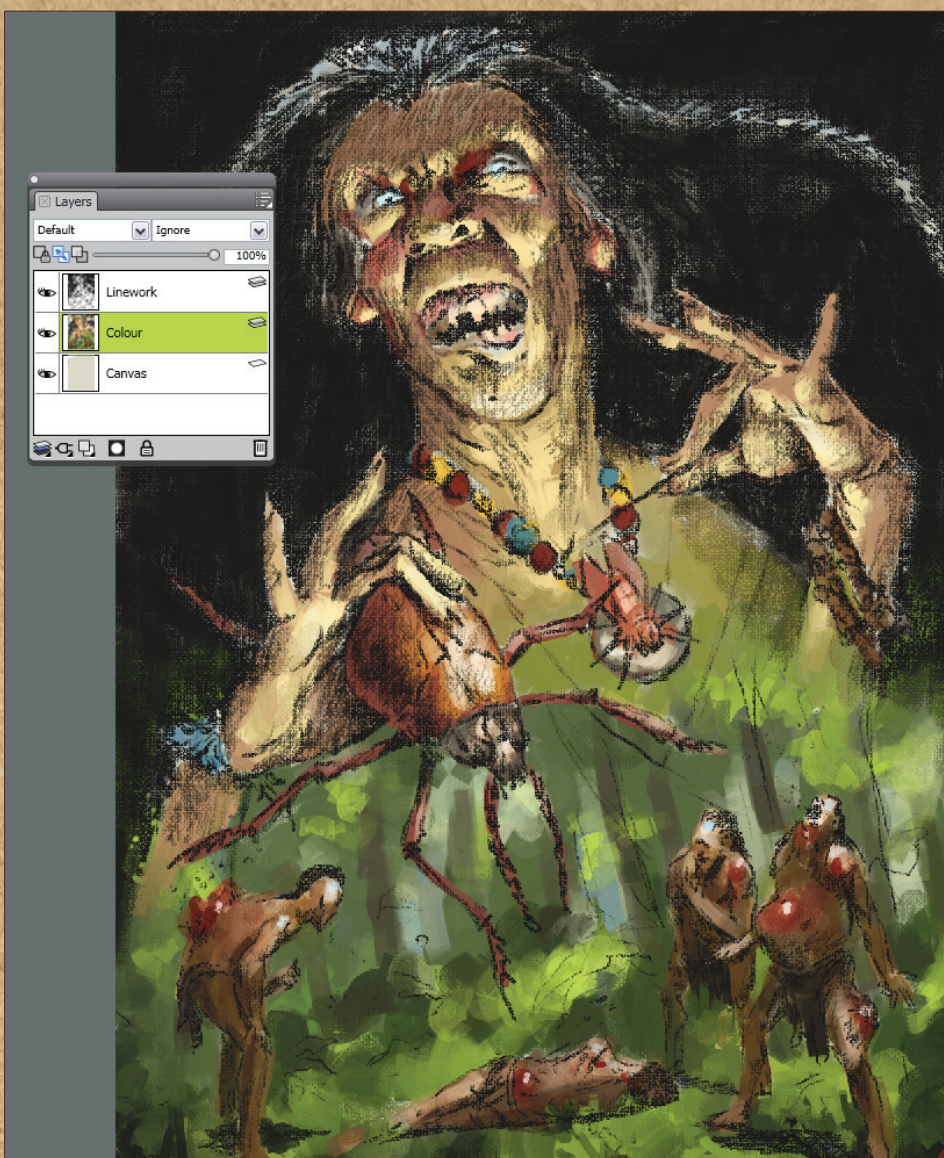
## Upsizing to Working Dimensions

I dropped both layers to the canvas and resized upwards to a working size using Canvas > Resize. My working size was actually larger than my specified final version so I could easily add detail without resorting to unfeasibly small brush sizes (Fig.04).

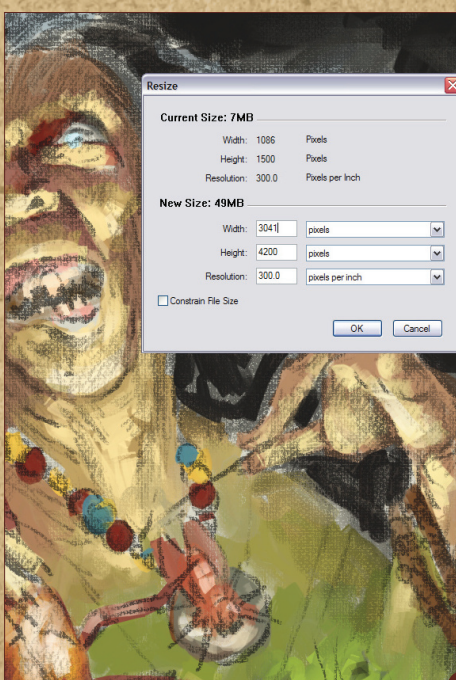
## Beginning Rough Detail

Working directly onto the canvas with a big Artists' Oils brush, I addressed the mamalarang's rough facial detail. It's essential to remember where your light source is coming from. In this case it's coming from somewhere below her chin in a spooky up-lighting effect. This gave good illumination to the center of her face whilst the cheeks and forehead receded into darkness. This then made it look as if she was staring out of the page at you (Fig.05).

Whilst it's always helpful to use references for faces there's no substitute for learning the form of the head and its three-dimensional surfaces or planes. Often it's easy to find a character reference, but difficult to find one lit in the way you want, unless you shoot your own. Because lighting can significantly change the appearance of a face, it's a useful skill to be able to apply



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your own lighting model to an image you've drawn from reference. There's no quick way to achieve this other than to practice drawing the human form and becoming familiar with its structure.

### Loony

For reasons I didn't fully understand, my mamalarang was looking more and more like a lunatic with every passing minute. I made a note to address this very soon. Meanwhile I continued to add rough color detail and flipped the image every so often to gain a fresh perspective. During these stages I wasn't bothered about getting my colors to blend. It was more about keeping true to the original values and ensuring the colors were fitting and didn't clash (**Fig.06**).

### Facial Detail

I zoomed in a bit on the face and add some finer detail. In addition to my standard Artists' Oils brush I used a circular grainy brush set to Grainy Soft Cover. I set the Color Variability on this brush to H: 11%, S: 1%, V: 1%. This meant that each dab would vary quite a lot in hue (color), and very slightly in saturation and value. This gave a faint mottling effect, which was well suited to skin, especially the witch's (**Fig.07**).



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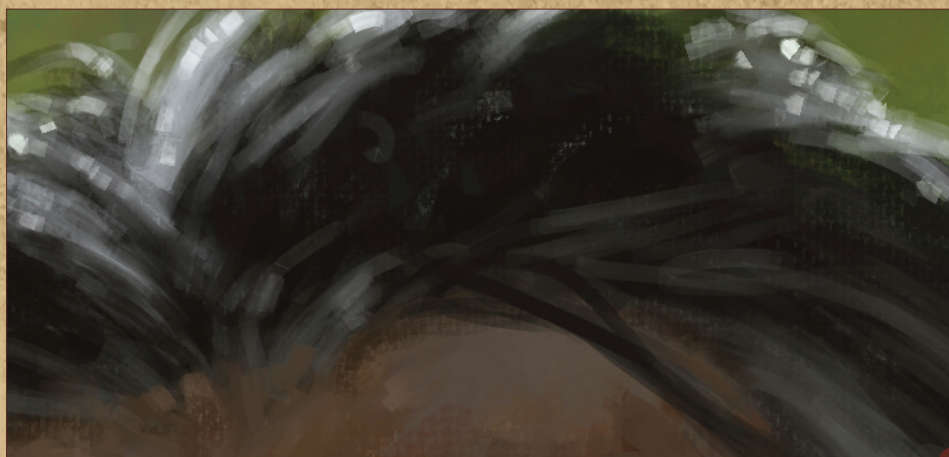
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### Changing the Expression

Then it was time to deal with the witch's crazy expression and make her a little more focused in her madness. I brought the eyebrows down and together, which pulled them in towards the

bridge of her nose. I then brought her eyelids closer together and made the lower eyelid almost horizontal against the eye. This gave the impression that she was creasing up her face in spiteful anger rather than surprise (**Fig.08**).





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## Highlighting Hair

In order to provide some highlights on her hair I assumed a secondary light source that shone from above and behind. This light source was cheating a little as it didn't affect any other part of the image. Its purpose was just to ensure that the mass of dark hair was not too flat.

When painting hair it's a good idea to paint clumps of hair rather than each individual strand. In this instance I used light pressure on my Artists' Oils brush for the highlighted strands, with stronger dabs for the occasional bright specula highlight (Fig.09).

## Using Reflections to Enhance Form

As well as value (light and dark), reflected light is also very useful when portraying form. I colored the beetle's shell red, and once I'd got the basic values down I added some reflected light. On the top of the shell I painted some low saturation, mid-value highlights to represent the diffused light from the sky. On the beetle's sides I used a more highly saturated mid-value green to simulate light reflected from the forest floor. I often exaggerate this effect as I find it can really add to the impact of a piece (Fig.10).

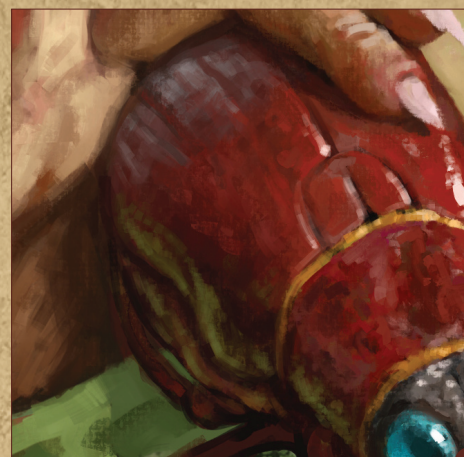
## Realistic Skin

As well as using the circular brush with Color Variability I also blended the skin using my Artists' Oils blender – essentially the same brush I used for painting, but with the amount set to 0. I was careful not to blend too much and also to leave some of the creases sharp edged, otherwise I would have ended up with a fuzzy mess. I also added some more highly saturated

color at the junctures between light and shadow to simulate the light passing through the skin. This is called sub-surface scattering. The skin was finished off with some subtle specular highlights (Fig.11).

## Witchy Accessories

I then decided that my mamalarang's insect pendant looked too similar to the beetle she's holding. I flipped it upside down and moved it onto her garment so that it looked like a brooch. I don't know if it's commonplace for witches to wear brooches, but there's nothing to say she shouldn't (Fig.12).



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### Painting Metal

I wanted her brooch to be metallic, so I used mid-gray as my base color. Bright specular highlights helped reinforce the metallic look as well as reflected light from the witch's skin and clothing. To finish off I made very sparing use of the Glow brush, set to a highly saturated low value orange, and dabbed it around the brightest highlights (**Fig.13**).

### The Forest Scene

So far I'd concentrated on the top half of the image so now I wanted to get started on the rest. I zoomed out to around 50% to strengthen and further define the lights and darks representing the dappling of sunlight filtering through the tree canopy.

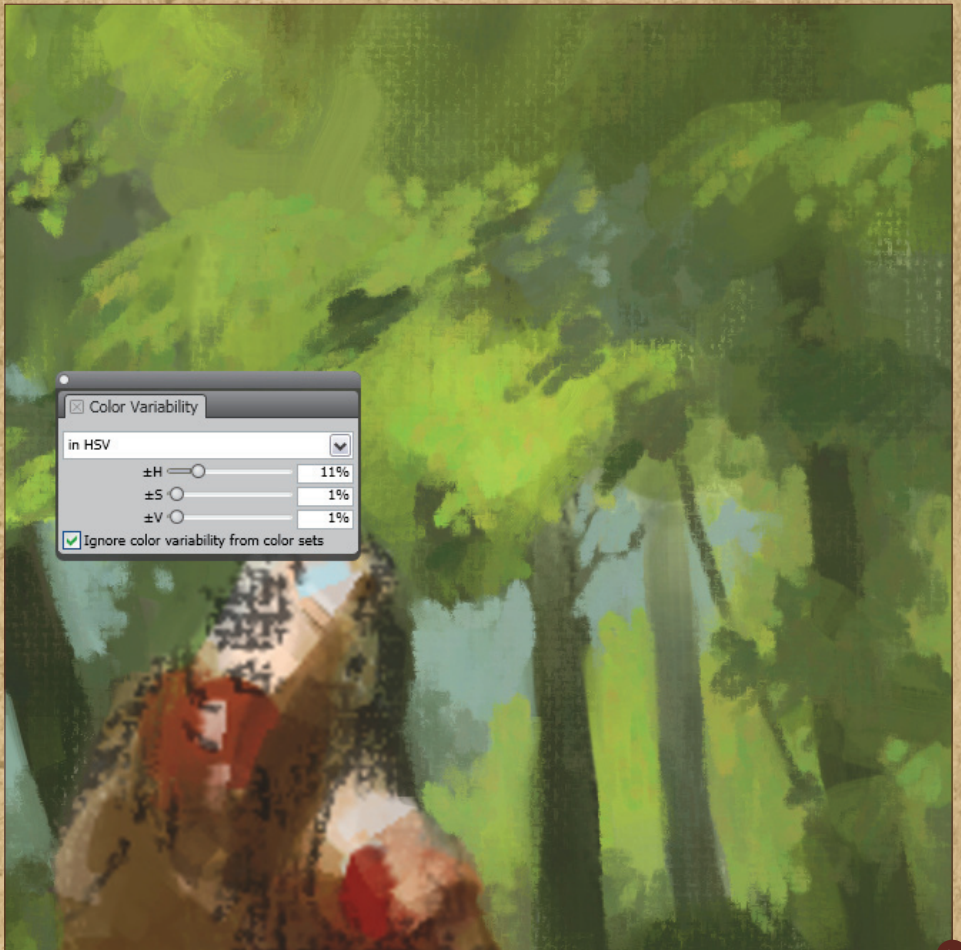
To simulate depth I used a couple of techniques. First, I reduced the saturation of the more distant foliage so it looked like there's a light haze in the air. Then I included a path in the picture, which curves off into the distance. Both these methods together helped to prevent the environment from appearing flat, like a painted backdrop on a stage (**Fig.14**).

### Foliage

Unless your foliage is close to the viewer then it's probably best not to try and paint every leaf and every twig individually. Too much detail in the background can distract from the real focus and it's very time consuming to do it that way. Here I used my Artists' Oils brush followed by



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my circular brush to suggest clumps of leaves and the odd branch or two.

Sometimes instead of actually painting the bunches of leaves, I'll pick the background color and "eat into" the foreground foliage paint. This creates gaps in the leaves through the use of negative space (**Fig.15**).

### Bug Bloated Bodies

My characters are infested by bugs so I wanted that clearly communicated. I thought that simply painting clouds of beetles and flies wouldn't give the effect I needed because it would just look like the characters were being attacked. Instead I added some grotesque boils and gashes to the bodies of my characters, where the bugs are



bursting out. I painted some specular highlights on these areas in particular to emphasize the taught flesh and the infected red hue (Fig.16).

## Adding Contrast

One method of accentuating the lighting on your piece is by using an Overlay layer. Here I wanted to make the sunlight on this character brighter and more striking. I set the Overlay layer to around 70% and painted over the sunlit areas with a bright, slightly orangey brush. When I finished I dropped the layer to the canvas and tidied up with the small circular brush (Fig.17).

## Adding Bugs

I only added these bugs when I'd fully rendered my character and his immediate surroundings. I did this because otherwise it would have been too time-consuming to paint around them. I could have used a separate layer for the bugs, but with the exception of tweaking I like to paint directly on the canvas. I included a great cloud of flies and beetles swarming out of his mouth just for fun (Fig.18).

## Painting the Forest Floor

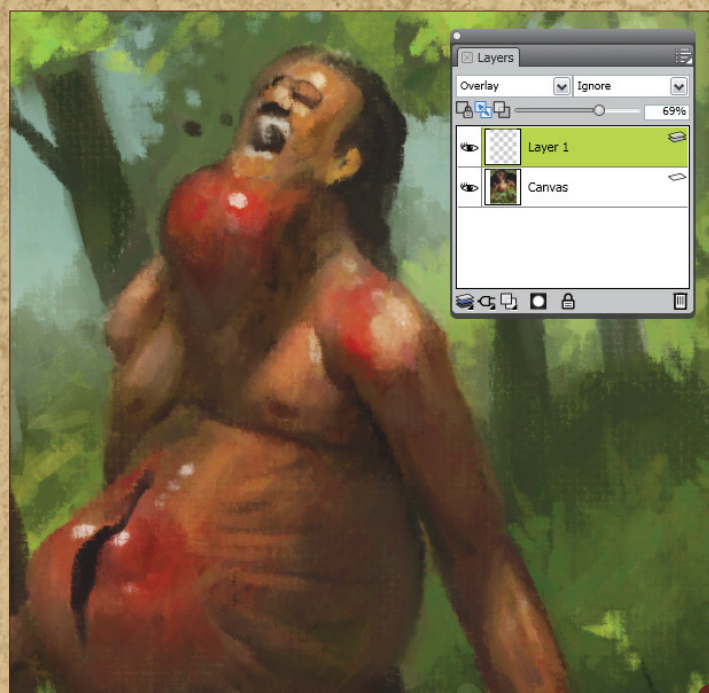
Take a walk in the woods or indeed anywhere in the countryside and you'll see that nature is not particularly orderly. It's difficult to tell where one plant ends and others begin, especially in an



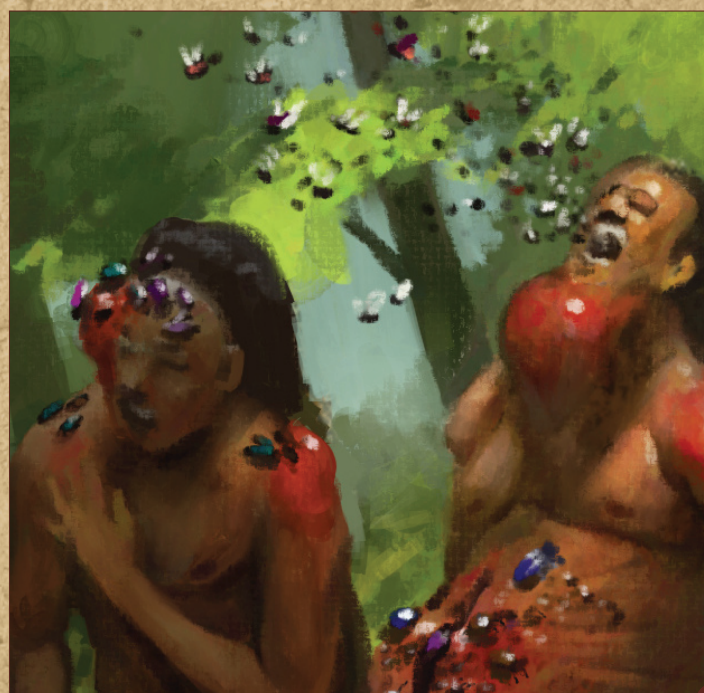
16

overgrown environment. Stones, grass, plants and tree roots are sometimes impossible to tell apart. For this reason I tried not to think in terms of individual bushes or plants, but concentrated on the values and the gross shapes.

When I had a patch of shadow I quickly painted some leaf edges, but I didn't go so far as to link them together or attempt to paint the network of branches and stalks that connected them. In this way I hoped to achieve a more random, natural

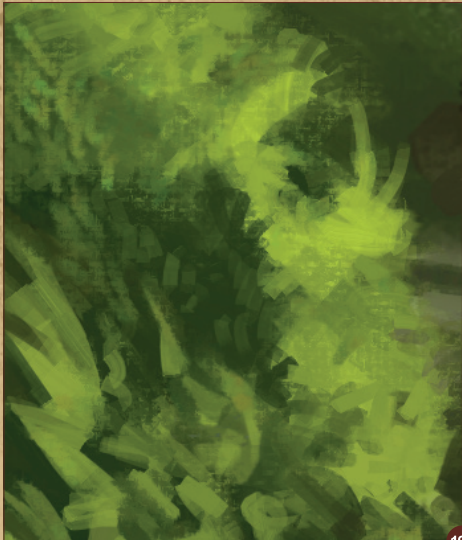


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look. I also kept in mind that I had some distant haze going on. This meant that the further away the foliage was the lighter the shadows became and the fewer details I needed to paint (Fig.19a – b).

### Contrasting Elements

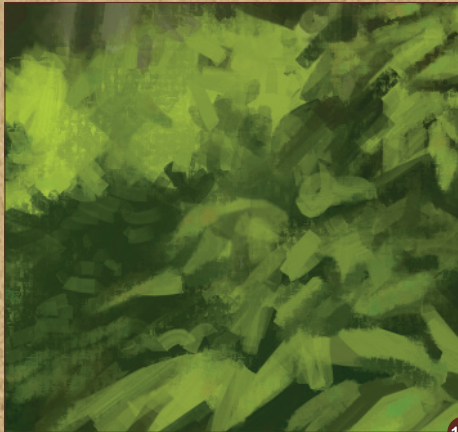
The big beetle is a key element in the image so I wanted it to stand out. I achieved this by keeping the color values on its legs very dark where they overlapped the forest scene. The bright distant haze contrasts nicely with the dark legs and pushes the beetle into the foreground (Fig.20).

### Don't Forget the Hair!

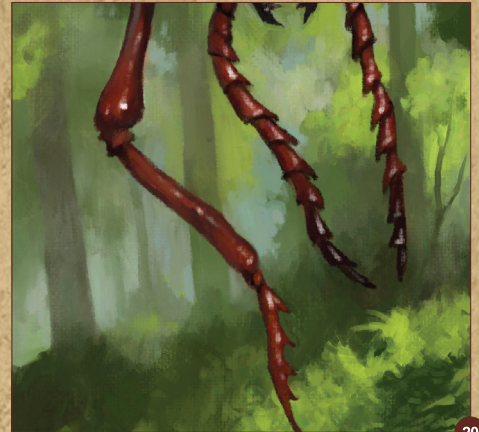
My beetle has hair. Not actually on its head, but wrapped around it, as this is the method by which the mamalarang can magic up her devious insect hoards. Again, I used the method of adding a little blue reflected light from the sky to give the impression of shiny hair rather than dull smoke, which it would otherwise look like (Fig.21).

### Tidying Up

I was almost done. I left the painting for a couple of days, then came back to see if I could spot anything that still needed doing. Because I started from a sketch and made any changes early on there shouldn't have been any nasty surprises. Happily in this respect it seemed OK. I thought it would be nice to give my witch a couple of ladybird earrings and tidy up a few brush strokes (Fig.22).



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Last of all I resized my image down to the specified size and saved it as a TIFF file (Fig.23). That concludes this tutorial and I hope you've found it useful.

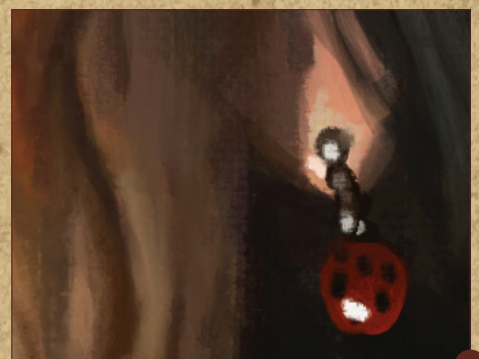
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"The goal was to make the illustration and the photo references look alike without making it look too clean"

# THE BLACK SHEEP IS COMING!

**MAKING OF BY XAVIER ETCHEPARE**

A giant sheep throwing a plane may not be the first thing that pops into most artists' minds, but when confronted with the task of creating a poster for Black Sheep Studio in Paris it seemed like an obvious choice for Xavier Etchepare, who tells us how he created his image in this month's Making Of.



## Making Of Black Sheep Is Coming

Software Used: Photoshop

This illustration is the result of a project for Black Sheep Studio in Paris and represents an action scene. I collaborated with the character artist Stéphane Chung. He took care of the characters while I was in charge of the setting.

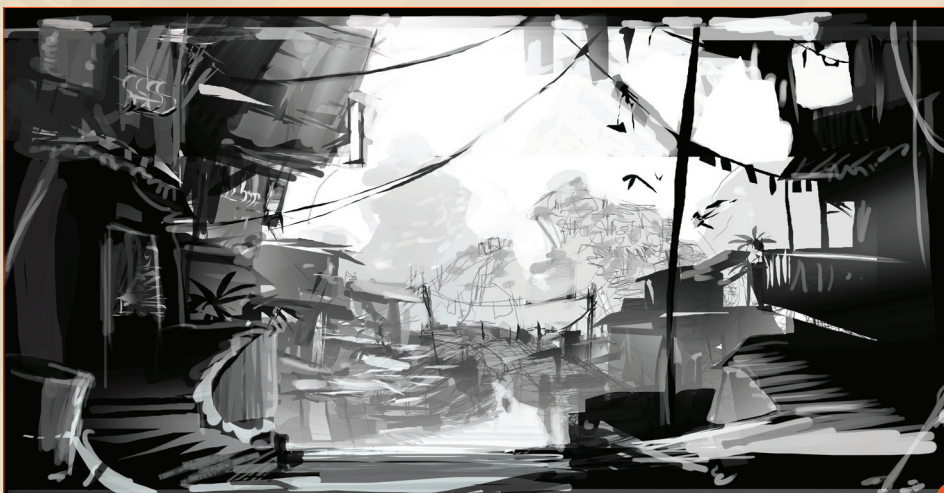
We wanted to work together on an illustration with a rich environment that gave us a lot of freedom to develop the action and the atmosphere. We immediately picked a setting close to a shanty town, probably due to the indirect influence of the game *Rage* by Bethesda that we had just played!

The composition was crucial to reach our goals. First, we wanted the characters to be placed on different levels of depth in order to have an un-crowded central space and obtain a dynamic overall composition. This led to an interesting image in terms of characters and setting. We chose a horizontal format because it is perfect for landscapes.

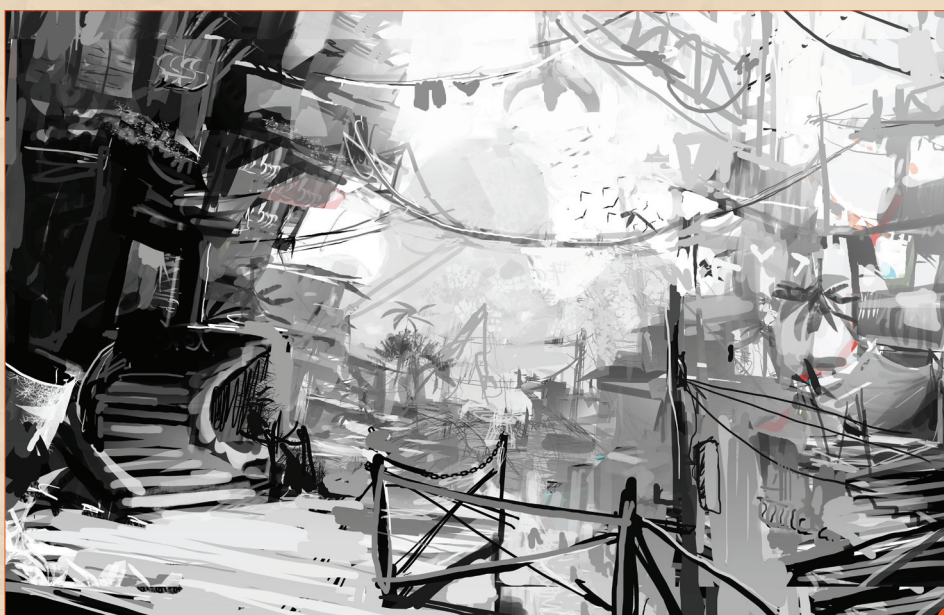
Even if my first design seemed to be a good starting point, the composition was still too symmetrical and all too neutral. The landscape was shot from the front and the horizon was perfectly level, which is often used to convey calm and was the opposite of what I wanted to do (Fig.01)!

I decided to slightly turn the camera to add some drama and balance the buildings. This enabled me to focus on the foreground, which helped immerse the viewers in the image and allowed us to add characters later (Fig.02).

Based on my previous conclusions I started working on another rough image and thinking about what I could add to the background. For example, mountains filled with cabins, an imposing element to give a sense of immense size (like a crane, tower or monster), exotic elements, etc (Fig.03).



Better!





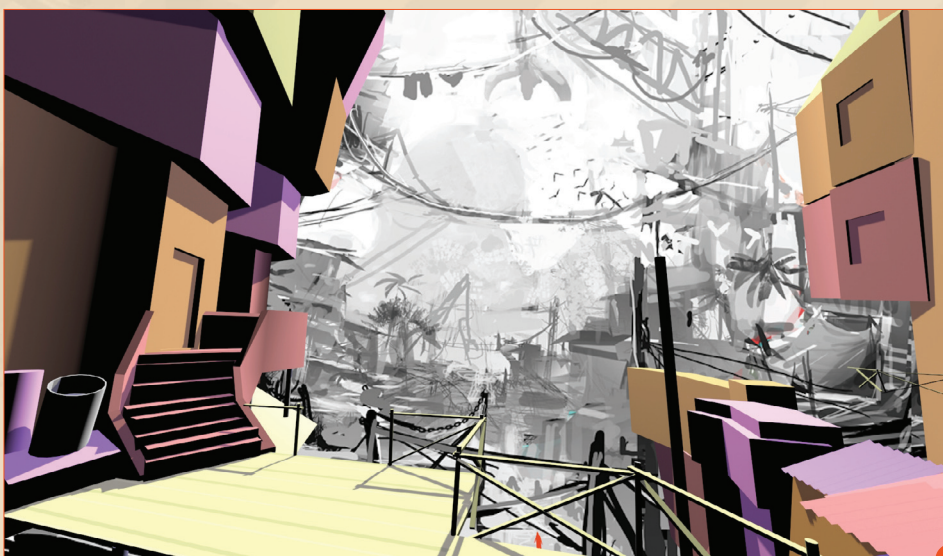
Once my foundation was ready I started working on the modeling of the buildings in the foreground using 3ds Max. That set the right perspective for the characters and the whole infrastructure, despite the lopsided appearance of the slum (**Fig.04**).

I then opened Photoshop, superposed my 3D render and started a new canvas that was 8000 x 4000 pixels. This was a huge format, but necessary for a poster size! I drew the buildings again, fine-tuned the volumes and started working on the details. I concentrated on the foreground to establish the mood. I added cables and suspended lines to emphasize the disused feeling. I placed a large electric pole on the right side to hang several cables from and to tie together the different parts of the image (**Fig.05**).

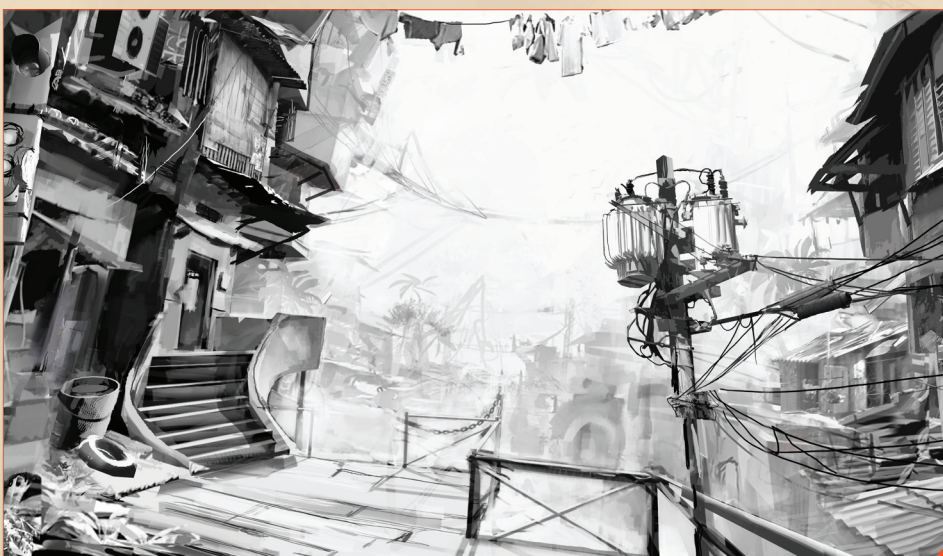
I enriched and added to the painting using pictures from the internet of shanty buildings, light panels, red traffic lights, etc. These images were perfect references to be used in different ways, such as to make brushes. This phase sparked my creativity as the images I picked triggered new ideas. For instance, I particularly liked the wrecks of airplanes and ships, so I thought about placing a huge engine in the middle of the city! Then I thought, "What if there was a monster holding a ship on his shoulder?" Then it hit me to add a black sheep rather than a monster overlooking the city, to point towards the company I was collaborating with to make this image (**Fig.06**).

As the image resolution was extremely large I decided to divide it into five pieces – the four corners plus the centre – to make small compositions. This allowed me to focus on each part individually, to work in a more comfortable way and to think step-by-step about things such as texture, perspective and light.

I completed each image using brush strokes and reference pictures. That took me to the coloring part. I wanted the illustration to look warm or



04



05



06



exotic and threatening at the same time, full of dirty materials, contrasts and imposing textures, etc (Fig.07 – 09).

After several tests of different weapons and poses I decided that I wanted the sheep to look as threatening as possible (Fig.10).

I gathered everything and homogenized the light and materials using a combination of personal brushes and ones by artists like Djahalland and Barontieri. The goal was to make the illustration and photo references look alike without making it look too clean. To do so I stained the pictures and added a few filters.

The image was then finished. I could send it to my colleague Stéphane so that he could place his characters (Fig.11).

Writing the Making Of for this image has been a great opportunity to have fun and apply the virtues of different techniques, such as the use of 3D and reference images. Thanks for reading!

## Xavier Etchepare

For more information please visit:

<http://xetchepare.cgsociety.org/gallery/>

Or contact them at:

[xavier.etchepare@gmail.com](mailto:xavier.etchepare@gmail.com)



07



08



09



10











# 2DA next month

Here is what's in the next issue of 2DArtist

## Interviews

Luca Gabriele Rossetti

## Articles

Sketchbook of Coran Stone

## Tutorials

### Manga Historical Characters

Chapter 2: Joan of Arc

by Patipat Asavasena

### Dreamscape

Chapter 3: Live Footage

by Jama Jurabaev

### Designing Droids

Chapter 4: Bar Tender Droid

by Ignacio Bazan Lazcano

### Painting Creatures from Mythology

Chapter 5: Jiang Shi

by Simon Dominic Brewer & Christopher Peters

## Making of

Victorian Voodoo by Jenny Healy

## Galleries

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Image By Jenny Healy





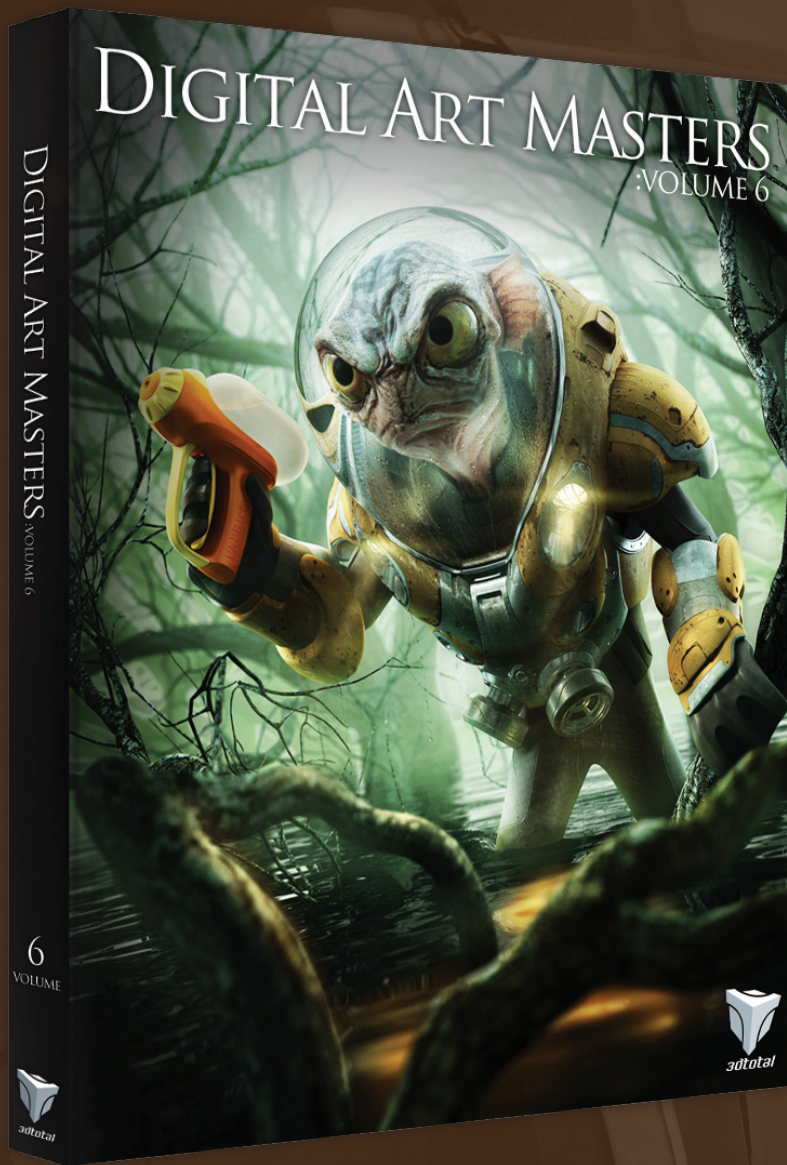
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# DIGITAL ART MASTERS VOLUME 6



With the release of 3DTotal's new book, *Digital Art Masters: Volume 6*, we have some exclusive chapters for you...

This is more than just an artwork book. Not only does it feature full-color, full-page images, but each artist has given a detailed description, in their own words, of the creation process behind each piece of published artwork. And they've done it especially for this book!

This month we feature:

## "9 SQRM PRODUCTION"

BY TOMASZ JEDRUSEK







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## 9 SQRM PRODUCTION

BY TOMASZ JEDRUSZEK

JOB TITLE: Freelancer

SOFTWARE USED: Photoshop



### INTRODUCTION

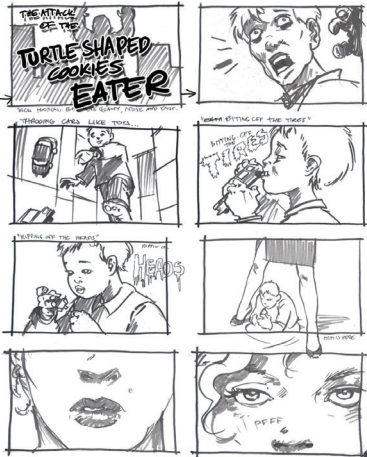
I am excited every time CGSociety announces their new challenge, as it is currently the best way to both express yourself as digital artist and get tons of new experience. Plus a world class jury guarantee your art will be fairly judged and individually viewed. In view of this there was only one thing left to do, which was to give it my best shot... and win!

**THE MOST DIFFICULT, AND YET MOST IMPORTANT, ASPECT THAT DICTATES THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF ART IS THE IDEA**

This challenge required artists to paint an image resembling early 50-60s low budget B-Movies. At first it seemed simple, as with most CG challenges, but I soon realized how tricky and difficult it really was. Of course, the simplest approach was to paint some kind of a creature from outer space and throw it in a town with streets full of pedestrians. This would be easy, but would it be enough to win the challenge? Well, maybe, but I decided it. Remember, those guys back in the 50s had a totally different vision of the future and space and hadn't been to the moon yet! The creatures they created were unique in their own way and it would demand a tremendous effort to design monsters with a similar impact today. It would be easy to create a ridiculous and inferior version of a pre-existing concept, which is why I dropped the idea and tried to tackle the subject from another angle as I always do in my challenges.

### APPROACH

The most difficult, and yet most important, aspect that dictates the success or failure of art is the idea. A brilliant idea determines whether



the audience acknowledges you or not. As I said, I decided to take a totally different approach, so it took me quite some time to evolve a brilliant idea that was different from other entries. Something that was original, powerful, and yet still set in that B-Movie mood – maybe even funny or a little scary. Then I found an image on the internet. It was of a smiling child as he sat by the feet of his mother, who was standing next to him.

That was it, I had my idea! From this single picture I was able to build up my entire story

and finally generate the motivation and atmosphere to proceed. As I said, it takes time but is critical for the success of your work. It is a little arrogant to always pay compliments to oneself, so I will only share with you one example of a previous CG challenge called "Carus Day". It followed the same methodology and approach, which is what made it so powerful and successful. The painting itself wasn't polished or detailed, but the story and idea carried emotions strong enough to win over the jury. I didn't know how my 9 sqrm Production would end, but the point

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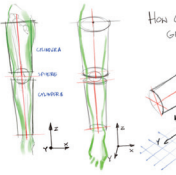
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is that with a good idea an image is already successful, if not to the world then at least to myself as an artist.

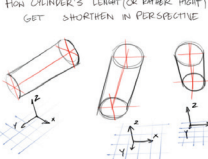
### STORY

Why did this photograph catch my eye? Well to be honest, at first it was the magnificent legs – but then I liked the relation between the two characters. On the one side we have an adult, probably a strong independent woman, and on the other we have a fragile child playing on the floor with a very different perspective on the world. There was also a protective feeling to the picture as the woman stood above the child. Even though I am unaware if she is his mother, my first impression was, "Here's Mummy!" and this was something I wanted to include. It is possible to see innocent play in a catastrophic context, and I did observe this once. Whilst playing, my son will rip the heads off LEGO miniatures or throw die-cast cars around the house and occasionally even manage to wrench their tires off using his teeth. He usually screams during all this, but remarkably is still able to eat cookies shaped like safari animals (his favorite being turtles). Consequently I decided to go into his world, where he assumes the role of a "giant monster", spreading chaos and destruction within a toy world. At this point I decided I would also portray his mother as an even more terrifying "monster".

From the very beginning I planned to take part in both the image and movie categories. When I had this idea I already had a concept for the movie and had decided to tell the story of a little monster and his mother. I would then show a small team creating the B-Movie poster for the image category (Fig.01).



HOW CYLINDER'S LENGTH (OR RATHER HEIGHT) GET SHORTEN IN PERSPECTIVE



90

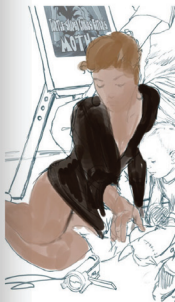
TITLE OF SECTION



At first it might look terrifying, but when you look closer you will realize it is all about the axis getting shorter when changing the point of view. When one axis gets shorter all other dimensions in the same direction get shorter too – simple (Fig.03).

Do not be afraid to make changes; after all, this is the reason for sketching. It will save time to make adjustments now rather than later when it is finished and polished. When this was finished I added a contour, which is something I usually don't do, but I was trying to give it a 50s movie poster feeling.

After I had created the line work I cleared the construction lines, but kept the layer to use again later. I then added the color. This is not my regular way of working as I usually block in the composition in color, but this approach suits the comic book style (Fig.04).

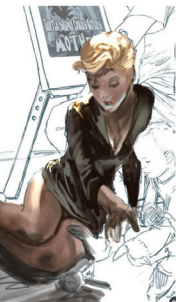


I now added volume to the shapes by way of shading and lights, using the construction lines as a guide to check the position of the bones (Fig.05).

Of course this is only a rough account of the process, as I never record my work. I work too fast to think about capturing it, but I hope you can grasp the idea. Mixing colors, translating



color palettes into shapes, painting curves and gently smoothing etc., is something you learn over the years, picture by picture. Skills improve slowly over time through the hundreds, as opposed to dozens, of art projects. If you wonder how I did it, I can provide this answer: you just need to be patient, work hard and eventually you will find yourself doing things almost automatically. Naturally you are not



obligated to understand every bone and muscle and how they react with light; there are countless possibilities and so obviously you will require some reference. If you have a beautiful wife that can be fun, but if you can still use photos. Be mindful however, as painting from reference images is much more difficult than from real life as it requires more artistic imagination (Fig.06).

TITLE OF SECTION

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The following shots of the "9 sqrm Production" book pages are featured here in full-resolution and can be read by zooming in...



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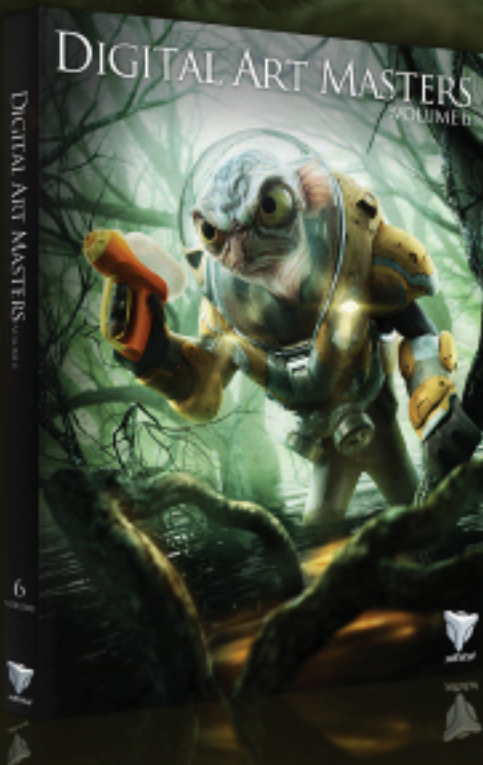
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:VOLUME 6



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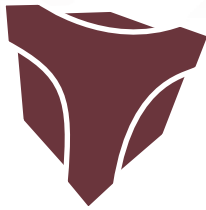
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